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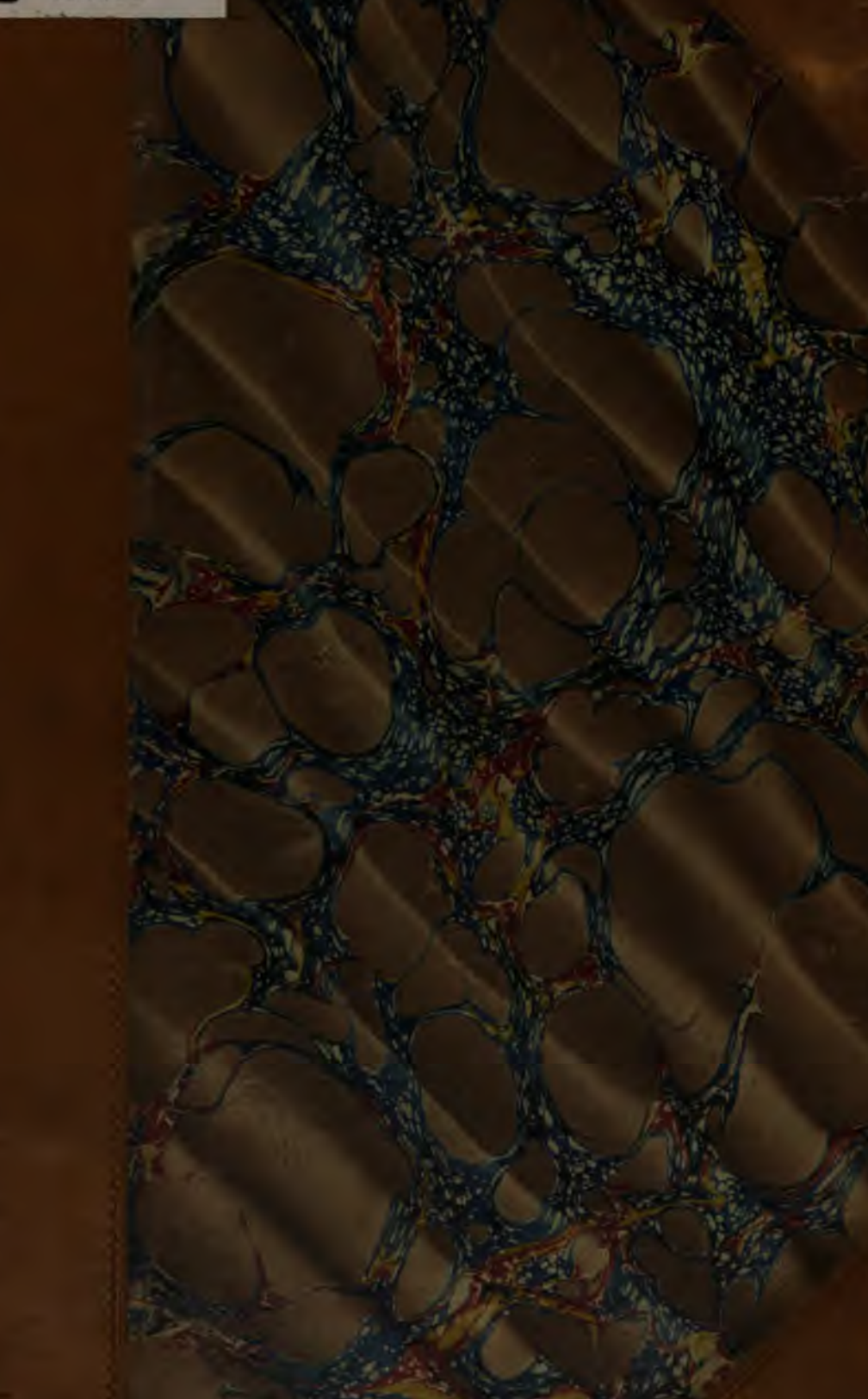
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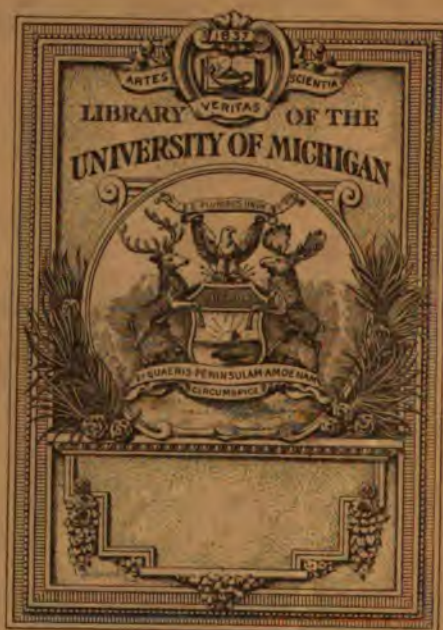
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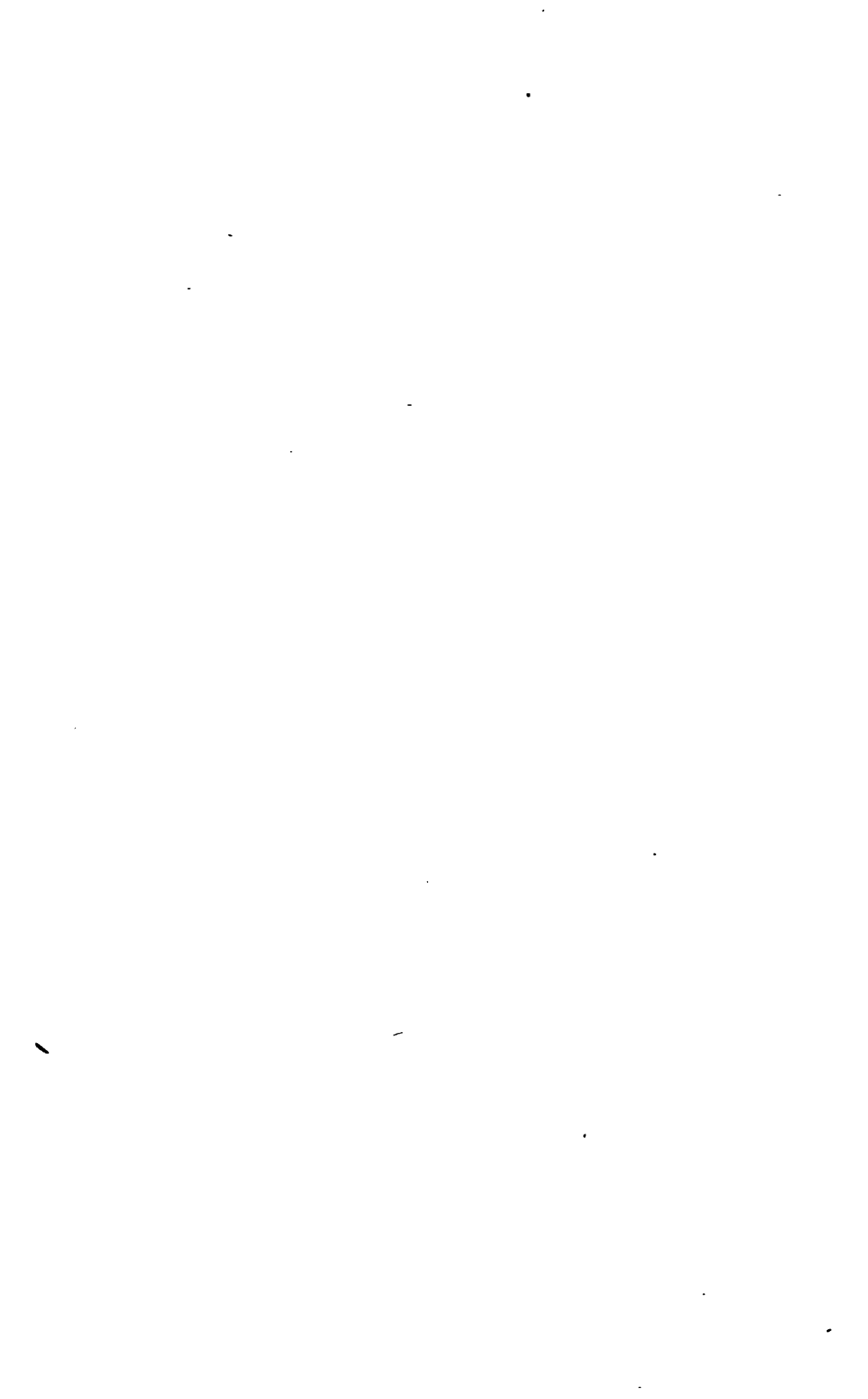






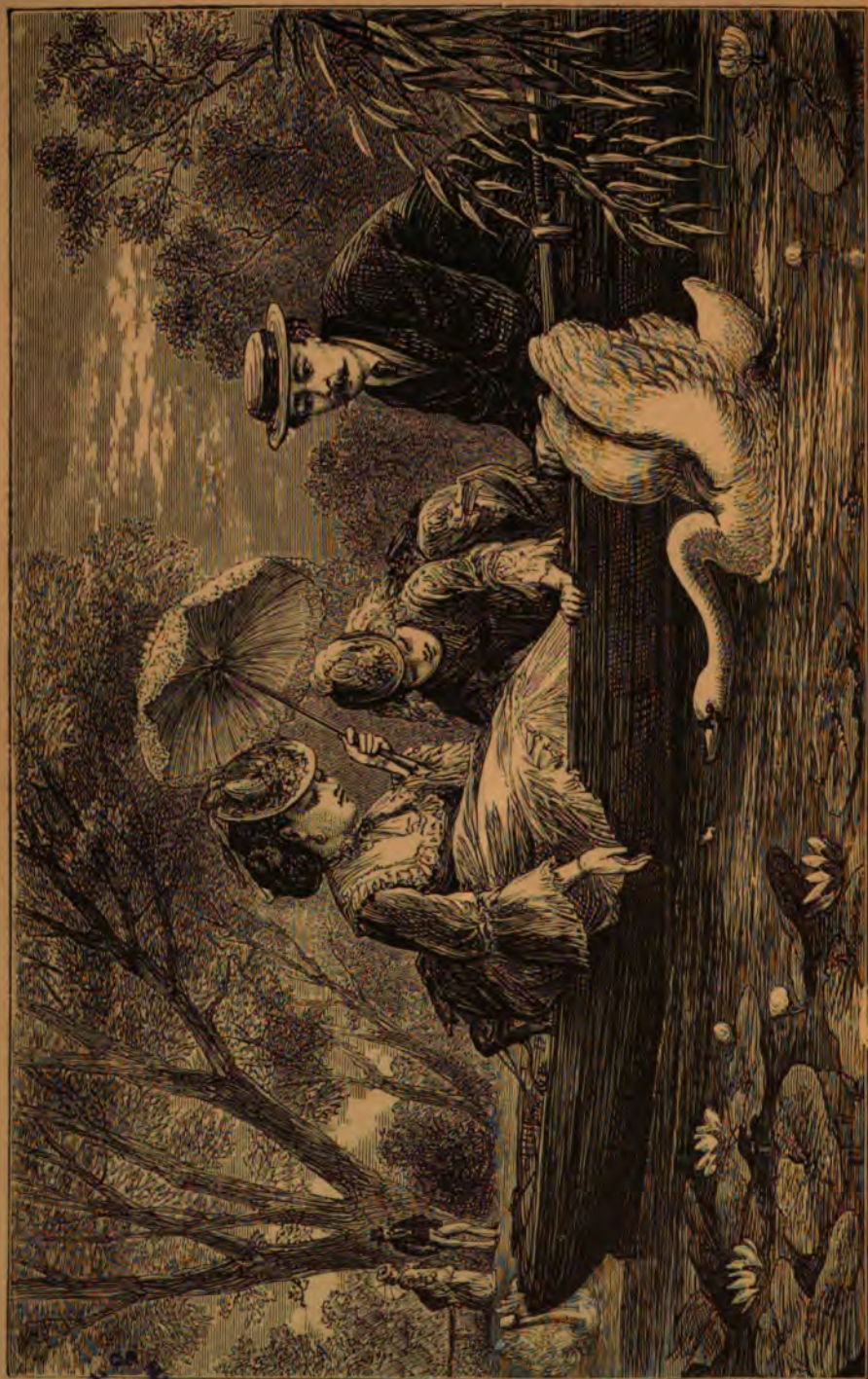












LONDON SOCIETY.

An Illustrated Magazine

OF

LIGHT AND AMUSING LITERATURE

FOR

THE HOURS OF RELAXATION.

VOLUME XXII.

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LONDON SOCIETY.

JULY, 1872.

A LEAP IN THE DARK.

BY LADY HARDY.

CHAPTER I.

THE TRAIN.

IT was the close of the London season—a hot dusty July day—when Richard Anstruther had invited his friend George Stuart to breakfast at his lodgings in St. James's Street; there they had sat for the last hour, dawdling over their eggs and coffee with other small dainties of a bachelor's breakfast table, and seemed in no hurry to leave off. They had been discussing other matters besides the substantial things of this world, and now were busily conning over their plans. It seemed a very difficult matter, at least to one of them, George Anstruther, to determine what he should do with his valuable person for the next few weeks.

'I wish I had a holiday, I should very soon know what to do with it; you lucky dogs, who have things all your own way, never seem to know how to enjoy them,' exclaimed George Stuart.

'There doesn't seem much to enjoy in this world,' growled Anstruther, looking lazily out of the window.

'Ay, that's because you have been over-fed with the sweets of life. Now if you want to get hungry for a holiday, and a jolly appetite to enjoy it, take my

advice, go into the Civil Service, and slave away from 10 to 4, week after week, month after month, and, by Jove, when the vacation comes you'll feel like a boy relieved from school trammels, and be ready to fling up your arms and leap into nowhere and never wish to come back again.'

'That's a sensation I feel every day in the week, only unfortunately, if we do leap into nowhere, we are sure to come back somewhere with the bound and rebound of an india-rubber ball. I've been everywhere, and seen everything, and I begin to think there's nothing new under the sun; if we could only go travelling among the stars now, there must be something new up there. Only fancy a fellow's head getting a swish from the tail of a comet, or getting in the midst of a shower of shooting stars as pitiless as a hail-storm.'

'You're *blasé*, old man,' said Stuart, slapping his friend upon the shoulder; 'if you'd only got some wholesome duties to perform—'

'And haven't I?' interrupted Anstruther. 'I don't know about their being wholesome though,' he added reflectively; 'but when I

think of the duties I've done, in the way of flirting, dancing, dining, riding, rowing, with variations on other matters this season, I begin to respect myself. "Dick Anstruther," I say, "there must be something in you after all, or you'd never have been able to pull through." London society, during the season, works harder than a London cab-horse, and I don't believe it enjoys itself much more.'

'Try Hurlingham for a week, fellows never get tired of that.'

Anstruther shook his head, ruefully. 'The sport's too tame—I've slaughtered too many innocents in my time, and spoilt my appetite for pigeon 'pie in consequence; whenever I carve that dainty dish, I feel like a murderer insulting the dead bodies of his victims.'

'Well, if you don't like Hurlingham, run down to the Chesters; they've got a charming place at Maidenhead, close to the river; you'll get plenty of boating, croquet parties, and heaps of pretty girls to play with.'

'I'm afraid of my morals, George.'

'Oh, croquet is harmless enough,' returned Stuart.

'Harmless!' repeated Anstruther, 'why it's the most dangerous wicked game going. I look on every hoop as a special by-way to perdition. A fellow feels inclined to change places with those vicious little balls, it seems as though it would be a most delightful thing to be held down by some particular dainty little foot, and croquetted to the other end of the world. I don't like to run into temptation, George. I regard croquet as a delusive man-trap, where a fellow's soul may be caught and ruined unawares. I got myself almost croquetted into a hole last summer—no more croquet for me, and, as for boat-

ing, there is no great fun in that. Who cares to see a guardsman roll from his funny into the water, like an hippopotamus in the Zoo; or some half-clothed cockney paddling his canoe like the barbarian he imitates and rivals in everything but his grace and courage.'

'It's hard to legislate for a fellow like you, Dick; you seem tired "of everything but sleep," as some poet says.'

'Humbug! I'm tired even of sleep—the world of dreams isn't always a pleasant place to ramble in—I'm tired of myself, George, that's the fact; but if I could only go to sleep for a week, and wake up and find myself somebody else—my own tailor for instance—it would be a new sensation. I should like to know what that gentleman's feelings can be, when he asks for his account and don't get it. I suppose, though,' he added thoughtfully, 'some people do pay their tailor's bills—you, for instance.'

'I'm a poor man,' returned George; 'he would not care to keep me on his books.'

'I regard you with awe and wonder,' said Anstruther, leaning back in his chair, and gravely inspecting his friend; 'you are quill-driving six days out of seven, for—how much is it?'

'Five hundred per annum precisely, and I think myself lucky to get it.'

'And I do believe you strive actually to live on it,' rejoined Anstruther.

'Rather,' replied George quietly. He did not add the information that, out of his year's stipend, he contrived—not only to pay his way, but to allow his widowed mother a fourth part of it—'You know, Dick, we are neither of us boys now; why don't you seriously set to work in some way or other. The world expects something of a

man before he's thirty, and you're not far off that.'

'Poor old world!' responded Anstruther, lazily; 'it must suffer from a chronic fever of disappointment—if I'd only been born with a birch broom in my hand, instead of a silver spoon in my mouth, I might have been an useful, though perhaps not an aristocratic member of the community; I could have swept the dust from the feet of society instead of heaping ashes on its head. I'll tell you a secret, George,' he added solemnly. But whatever that secret might be, it was destined to remain one, so far as George Stuart was concerned, for Richard Anstruther's thoughts flowed into a different channel, as a letter was delivered to him. He glanced at the address—'From Charley Woollaston,' he said, as he broke the seal—'you remember Charley, don't you? he chummed with me at Oxford, his last term—my first.'

'I remember him,' answered Stuart, 'but I didn't cotton to him; I always thought he was a bit of a humbug, a quiet, mousy man, and a thorough tuft-hunter.'

'Well! Charley had his faults,' returned Anstruther; 'he did dearly love "the sound of a lord," but then he was a good batsman, and rivalled Tom Tug himself at an oar; and more than all, he was, or seemed to be, impressed with a profound respect for *me*. He has sent me many invitations to pay a visit to his little place in Berkshire, and, by Jove, here's another of 'em—see what he says,' and he threw the letter over to his friend Stuart, who scanned it hastily and gave it back, saying—

'I don't consider such vague words as these make up an invitation. "He hopes you'll find time some day to pay a visit to Grove Manor."'

'I'll go at once,' said Anstruther,

decidedly. 'By-the-bye, if I remember rightly, Charley married an heiress, a wonderful beauty by his account; but Charley's geese were generally all swans—however she's evidently the owner of Grove Manor—sounds well doesn't it? and looks well on paper. Charley always set a high value on himself; he has evidently gone at a high figure, and made what is called "a good match."'

'A lucifer match, perhaps. I despise a man who marries for money,' replied Stuart, loftily.

'Mere morbid sensibility, old man,' rejoined Anstruther; 'wait till some discriminating heiress has the good taste to propose to you.'

'I'm afraid I shall be a long time in waiting.'

'Well, you know, every man can't expect to have Charley's luck—I'm rather anxious to see Charley's choice.'

'You'll find it slow work down there.'

'I shall give their wits a fillip, send propriety packing out of their household, and, if Mrs. Woollaston's pretty, perhaps I shall flirt with her.'

'Very condescending that,' replied Stuart; 'but you may find it a dangerous amusement—take care how you play with edge tools, you may cut your fingers.'

'I don't suppose Mrs. Woollaston's sharp-set like a razor—warranted to shave clean.'

'I wouldn't warrant anything of Charley's.'

'What! not even his wife!'

'Not even his wife,' answered Stuart, gravely. 'He's a sneak, and a snob, Dick, and I don't like the idea of your going to his house, even with the laudable object of flirting with his wife.'

'And the prospect of making him jealous!' rejoined Anstruther. 'Fancy Charley suffering

under an acute attack of the green-eyed monster!—animated by that noble idea, I'll see about the trains at once.'

'Would you go to-day?' said Stuart, elevating his eye-brows in some surprise.

'Why not?' said Anstruther; 'if you want to test your friends' affections take them by surprise.'

Having ascertained what hour the train started, he packed his carpet-bag, jumped into a hansom, and reached Paddington in full time to catch the two o'clock express. Having chosen his seat, centre compartment, back to the engine, he deposited his bag therein, and then sauntered up and down the platform, smoking in that slow, dreamy fashion, which none but genuine smokers thoroughly enjoy. Presently the small, lithe figure of a woman came tripping along the platform, glancing anxiously into the different carriages in search of a seat, and at length deposited herself in a second-class carriage, just as Richard Anstruther came sauntering past.

'A neat little foot,' he thought, as she sprang in, then, lifting his eyes, he caught a momentary glimpse of a face that looked charming. He seemed struck by an idea that it would be far more agreeable to sit opposite that pleasant-looking young party, than to be boxed up with the hungry heads of families, hurrying home to dinner, hot, dusty, tired, and disposed to take a grumbling, gloomy view of things in general, perhaps with sufficient animation left to discuss the money market, and lament the communistic tendencies of the age and the downfall of kingdoms.

The bell rang, the guard came swinging along, slamming the doors of the carriages as he passed

them, and waving his green flag, a signal to start the train.

'Hi! guard, hi!' exclaimed Anstruther, as he rushed along, snatched his bag out of the seat he had first taken, dashed back again, and sprang into a second-class carriage, just as the train was moving out of the station, and found himself the breathless *vis-à-vis* of the lady who was unconsciously responsible for his irrational proceeding. It may be said they were alone in the compartment, for an elderly French lady sinking into a state of somnolent bliss may be considered as nobody.

The girl opened a magazine and began to look through its pages—the leaves were uncut. Mr. Anstruther offered his paper-knife, which was graciously accepted, leisurely used and returned with a smile, that eyes and lips combined to make enchanting; the eyes then dropped demurely upon the book, and their owner's attention was or seemed to be speedily absorbed therein. This gave Mr. Anstruther an opportunity of gazing, unrebuked, at the lady's face, and he forthwith commenced making a mental catalogue of her charms, and in his thoughts he made running comments thereupon something in this fashion—'Sweeping lashes; glorious eyes—nose. Umph! decidedly snub; creamy complexion; lips, cherry ripe, and red, but too full; mouth altogether too large. She's not handsome—no—decidedly *not* handsome—not even pretty, but merely interesting.' His mind did not long remain in this state of qualified admiration; a smile, provoked perhaps by what she was reading, broke over the girl's face, and played in a thousand arch-dimpled graces round her mouth; then he pronounced her charming, and resumed stock-taking to the

overthrow of his first opinion; he stared at her with wavering admiration, till, at last, he decided that her mouth was exactly the right size, lips dangerously tempting, and the nose that he had dared mentally to stigmatize as snub, the most delicious little *nez retroussée* in the world, and no other would have suited her face so well. Then he collected together, in his mind's eye, the noses of all his female acquaintances, and fitted them mentally on to the face before him. Amused by the fancy portrait he produced, he could not refrain from a low, half-suppressed, though perfectly audible laugh. The lady's eyes were raised with a severe serio-comic expression to his face, then dropped to her book again. He was not given to blushing, but he turned red from sheer vexation. 'She fancies I am laughing at her,' he thought, and felt half inclined to apologise, but he didn't. 'Why should I apologise?' he thought, 'I've a right to laugh if I like.' He threw himself back in his seat and continued contemplating her charms, changing his opinion every minute concerning them. He fancied he detected a slight twitching at the corners of her mouth, as though she, too, were inclined to laugh, but propriety forbade it. He made some inane remark about having the window open or shut. 'It might be just as he pleased,' she said, but encouraged no further conversation, and again became absorbed in her book.

'What hypocrites women are,' he thought, 'she knows I'm looking at her. I dare say she thinks I'm admiring her.' He glanced at the gay cover of the magazine she was reading, and felt a sudden hatred of all periodical literature—'London Society,' in particular—and made a vow that he would

never expend another shilling on that valuable periodical.

'She's taking two plunges for a pearl,' he thought—'I hope she'll find one; she'd much better have been talking to *me*, than wasting her time on that.' As he was concocting an imaginary conversation, the train slackened its speed, the young lady threw aside her book, and prepared to descend.

'This is Winthorpe Station, I think,' he said, with an inquiring glance at his companion.

'Yes,' she answered, 'I get out here.'

'So do I,' he answered. As the train stopped he sprang out, and assisted her to alight and to get out her baggage, a bandbox, and one or two small parcels. She thanked him, as they stood on the platform, and held out her hands to receive her things, but he refused to give them up.

'I believe I'm going your way,' he said, 'and—and I delight in carrying a lady's luggage, especially a bandbox.' The girl smiled demurely, and glanced up at him; it seemed rather odd to see a man of his elegant, fashionable appearance, marching along by her side, carrying her shabby little parcels; but he didn't seem to mind it.

'Are not you afraid of being taken for a man milliner?' she said, with a quiet air.

'Not at all,' he answered; 'in some cases I shouldn't mind being taken for better or worse.'

By this time they had got to the end of the platform; she stopped here, saying—

'I really must relieve you now, I am going some distance.' He professed his willingness to walk a hundred miles, but the young lady beckoned a fly and got in. 'At least I shall know where she is going to,' thought he, as he deposited her parcels beside her.

She smiled, bowed, and thanked him again, and gave her orders to the driver.

'To Grove Manor.' He cracked his whip, and drove off.

'Whew! here's sport indeed!' thought Anstruther, as he watched them from the station. Then he hailed another vehicle and reiterated the lady's order. 'To Grove Manor—but drive slowly.'

CHAPTER II.

THE MANOR.

The fly rolled out of the station and through the dingy little town, which seemed a veritable slough of despond to him, but they soon gained the open country, and went on winding their way through pleasant grassy lanes, with thick hedgerows on either side, richly clothed in their green foliage, with sweet-smelling or bright-coloured flowers climbing up and peeping out from the luxuriant leaves as though they too loved to revel in the sunshine. Mr. Anstruther's thoughts busied themselves with fancy sketches of his friend's household, and speculated as to the probability of his travelling companion being Mrs. Woollaston. She was certainly going to 'Grove Manor,' but perhaps she was only a visitor, a friend or relative staying in the house; but whatever she was, he decided that she was 'charming,' and he looked forward to fine times at 'Grove Manor.' He was anxious to get there, and inquired how far it was, and ascertained it was about four miles.

'Tell me when we are getting near it,' he said.

'All right, sir,' and on they went, Anstruther's speculations concerning his friends the Woollastons and his young travelling

companion, getting more vague every minute.

'Here we are, sir,' said the driver at last, and Mr. Anstruther looked out. They had drawn up opposite some large, handsome, highly-decorated iron gates, flanked on one side by a pretty ornamental lodge, with the porch, indeed almost the entire front of the building, covered with wisteria, which was bearing its second burthen of rich purple flowers. A wide, well-kept gravel path went winding through the grounds, till it lost itself in the trees and shrubberies beyond. On hearing the carriage stop, a gorgeously-attired individual, in red plush breeches, and coat studded with gilt buttons, came leisurely from the lodge, and, with an air of spurious dignity, threw the gates wide open, and the carriage rolled in. The appearance of the place so far, and the sight of this resplendent creature, impressed Mr. Anstruther with a grand idea of his friend 'Charley's' wealth, but a profound contempt for his judgment.

'What a fool Charley must be,' he thought, 'to keep such a thing as that at his gate! the fellow wants kicking.' Then he looked curiously round for the mansion, but no mansion appeared in view. Presently, there loomed upon his sight a collection of detached and semi-detached villas, built in a gingerbread fancy fashion, with stuccoed fronts and ornamented chimney pots, each dwelling or double dwelling being about a dozen feet from the path, and standing in an enclosed space 'in its own grounds,' indeed, as Messrs. Oxenham would describe it. The gardens were laid out according to the taste of their owners, some were filled with gay-coloured scentless flowers, others were more in a tea-garden fashion, being

ornamented with as much rock-work and dilapidated statuary as could well be crammed into them;—they were all different shapes and sizes, some oblong, some square, some like a band of broad ribbon running round the house, here and there was a triangular patch run in wedge-like to fit itself into its neighbour's land. The houses seemed to be of different sizes and in different styles; there was no uniformity even in their ugliness, and one felt inclined to wonder from what architectural genius so much vile taste emanated, and how they managed to collect it all on one spot.

'How far are we from the Manor-house?' inquired Anstruther, looking round in some surprise.

'These be all the Manor houses, sir, they are all called "Grove Manor," sir; they ain't got no other name.'

'But—but surely we came in by the private entrance to Grove Manor proper?' said Anstruther.

'Not at all, sir, proper nor improper, them big gates don't lead nowhere but here; it is the only entrance to all these houses—there ain't no other way to get in, nor yet to get out. I know what you're thinkin' on; it's Mr. Timmins, the porter, as surprises you. I'll tell you how 'tis. The gentry hereabouts'—he jerked his head towards the villas generally—'are rather fine folks, and likes to see things spick and span, so they pays so much a-head all round to find Mr. Timmins in plush breeches, buttons, and hair oil.'

'Oh!' exclaimed Mr. Anstruther, collapsing at this intelligence, his ideas of Mr. Woollaston's wealth dwindling rapidly away.

'Where did you say I was to stop, sir?'

'Well,' he answered, rather

doubtfully, 'I suppose you don't know of a gentleman named Woollaston?'

'To be sure I do, sir; first house, left hand, round the corner.' Thither he conveyed his fare, and deposited him at a little green gate leading up to a villa of the general style, only it seemed to be turning its back on the other villas; the garden seemed a little more primly kept; there were no fair flowers in the narrow strip of ground, nor weeds overgrowing it, only a few respectable-looking shrubs, warranted to last green all the year round—with a border of parsley running from one side of the bed to the other. Things were evidently conducted with economy and prudence combined. Mr. Anstruther discharged his fly, marched up to the door and rang the bell. A small boy in buttons answered his summons. 'Was Mr. Woollaston at home?' He did not know, he would go and see if the gentleman would be good enough to give his card.' Mr. Anstruther did so, and the boy and the buttons disappeared, round a corner a few feet off. There was a rustling of paper, a shuffling of feet, and a whispering of voices; then the buttons reappeared and ushered Mr. Anstruther into the drawing-room, and left him there with the pleasing information that Mr. Woollaston would be with him immediately. Left to himself, Mr. Anstruther proceeded to take a survey of the apartment, trying from that to form some notion of its mistress; but he looked upon a blank: the room was cold, prim, and cheerless, and bore no evidence of a woman's life—none of the small unmistakable signs of the feminine presence; no little innocent attempts at ornamentation—no knick-knackeries strewn with skilful carelessness about. There was no evidence of

any other taste than that the stern uncompromising upholsterer displayed, and even his handiwork was screened as much as possible from view by highly-glazed holland covers, even the looking-glass was veiled and shrouded with yellow canvas. So far he had got in his observations when the door was thrown open, and his friend, Woollaston, entered the room. He was rather a small-made, muscular man, who looked as though he could be 'good at an oar' still; he had a quantity of light, almost flaxen, hair, and a clean shaven chin, small, keen blue eyes, and a delicate nose, rather inclined to be snub. His greeting of his old friend Anstruther was so overwhelmingly warm as to suggest a doubt of its sincerity. Over and over again he told him he was 'delighted, really charmed to see him,' and shook his hand as though it were a pump-handle and he never meant to let it go. Anstruther thanked him for his welcome and cordially replied to it, and expressed his great anxiety to be introduced to Mrs. Woollaston.

'You've written me such glowing accounts of her attractions, Charley,' he said, dropping into the old familiar terms, 'that it was a long time before I could make up my mind to face them.'

'Ah! well, you know, a fellow generally does admire his own wife,' rejoined Woollaston, with some little embarrassment; 'at least he ought to—but—all things change, you know—and women more than most things. Why a girl will be as thin as a thread-paper one day, and in two or three years she'll be as stout as a water-butt—and you mustn't expect to find Mrs. Woollaston quite "all my fancy painted her." She had the measles a year ago, and never quite recovered her complexion;

but, I tell you what, if there was a show for the exhibition of hands and feet, as there is for cats, dogs, and even barmaids, my wife would carry off the prize. She has the most beautiful hand and foot in the world,' he added, with a most impressive gesture, as though there could be no doubt of that fact.

Mr. Anstruther had made up his mind long before this that his fair travelling companion certainly was *not* Mrs. Woollaston. It was speedily arranged between the two friends that so long as Mr. Anstruther remained in the neighbourhood he was to be a guest at Grove Manor. His introduction to the mistress of the house was delayed in some unaccountable manner till the dinner-hour was fast approaching, when Mr. Anstruther, according to the instructions he had received, descended to the library, a small room some twelve feet square, with four or five hundred ancient looking volumes, mostly on religious subjects, imprisoned in glass cases, as though to do penance for the unorthodox opinions they had promulgated in their early days. A writing-table with pens, ink, and paper, with other odds and ends scattered untidily about, and a few shabby leather chairs completed the furniture of the room. There, seated in an uneasy-looking chair bolt upright, was a lady who might have been illustrated by the thread-paper, but certainly showed no intention of merging into the water-butt. She was evidently some years older than her husband. It was impossible to form a guess how old she was; she might have been forty or even fifty, being one of those persons who look as though they had been born old and had never had a youth to lose or a past to regret. She looked as though she had been

nursed on vinegar and familiarized with sackcloth and ashes from her cradle. She had not, nor ever could have had, a spark of beauty to allure or enchant the opposite sex, even if she would have put it to so vile a use. She was a tall, thin, angular woman with sharp acid features, which mentally set your teeth on edge to look at them. It is as well to sum up the lady's character at once, she was as severely and uncompromisingly virtuous as she looked—a sort of moral animated signpost to show people the way they ought to go, leaving a milestone behind her to mark the way she herself had come—no foolish folly had ever touched her sainted life—though perhaps she was a trifle more moral and religious in her conversation than her actions—some people are. A thin coating of religious veneering looks well, and adds wonderful weight to a common nature.

'My wife, Mrs. Woollaston,' exclaimed her happy owner, presenting the lady to his friend. She presented two fingers to Mr. Anstruther, saying, 'It was the first time she had had the honour of receiving an *unexpected* visit from one of Mr. Woollaston's friends.'

'Unexpected blessings are always the most welcome,' replied Mr. Anstruther, giving the two fingers a hearty grip, 'even though they come in the shape of patent boots and whiskers.'

'Mrs. Woollaston won't be surprised at any of your jokes, Anstruther,' said her husband; 'I've told her what a queer fellow you are.' The lady smiled faintly, and replied by some freezingly polite inanity. Dinner was announced, Mr. Anstruther offered his arm, and she led the way to the dining-room. The dinner was served on crested dishes, with a great deal of show and very little comfort. To

intelligent eyes, 'sham, sham, sham,' was written upon everything and everywhere as well as upon the faces of the host and hostess—greasy water was served for soup—the bones of a bloater would have been ashamed to claim acquaintance with the fish—the capon was a consumptive chicken that must have perished in its early infancy—the mutton was a libel on the prime Southdown, and the champagne was gooseberry of the greenest. The juvenile man servant shone resplendent in brass buttons, and was assisted in his duties by a young woman with a swollen face tied up in pickled brown paper. Mr. Woollaston was afflicted with a spasmodic attack of cheerfulness, and kept up a running fire of small talk with an accompaniment of nervous little laughs to point his sentences. Mrs. Woollaston did not seem to be conversationally inclined, though Mr. Anstruther did his best to draw her into sweet discourse, but failed lamentably.

'I'm glad to see Charley has not lost his good spirits,' he said; 'it is never pleasant to find an old friend changed from his old self.' The lady looked reproachfully at her lord and master as she answered—

'A change is sometimes a great improvement—but Mr. Woollaston occasionally suffers from an exuberant cheerfulness that is by no means becoming.'

'You're answerable for that,' replied Mr. Anstruther; 'matrimony tames down some natures, though it seems to have had an exhilarating effect on Charley; but then he was always a gay fellow and a *great* favourite with the ladies.'

'Oh, I say, come old fellow!' exclaimed Woollaston, deprecatingly, though he rather liked the character of a gay Lothario and

had done his best to win it in the old days; but times were changed now, and he considered a decorous demeanour more suited to his position.

'Oh, it is all very well to talk now that you have persuaded a lady, and such a lady,' he added, with accentuated respect, 'to take you in hand and lift you out of the way of temptation; but I assure you, Mrs. Woollaston, I was always afraid of Charley striking on a rock—I used to watch over him like a mother, and I suffered more agonising pangs on the score of Charley's morals than I ever could have felt for my own!'

'Evidently,' exclaimed Mr. Woollaston with an uncomfortable laugh, 'you've weeded or tried to weed your neighbour's garden of folly and neglected your own.'

'Ah! you put on that air of unnatural levity to cover your confusion, Charley,' said Anstruther, with mock solemnity, 'nobody ever took the trouble to cultivate my virtues as I've tried to cultivate yours, or I believe they would have outgrown my own knowledge, and I should have gone in for a prize, and perhaps found myself at Exeter Hall holding forth for the good of the public instead of being here on the loose with wicked old memories bubbling up. Why, Charley, you're blushing! but you needn't be afraid; I'm not going to lift the curtain and let the light in upon your old days, or give a special sketch of your evil doings—though I may tell you this, Mrs. Woollaston, wherever there was a pretty girl to be found we always knew where to look for Charley.' He looked and smiled in such a knowing way as to suggest a great deal more than his words implied; then he added, 'when the news of his marriage burst upon us like a bombshell my heart bled for the

victims of his fascinations.' Mrs. Woollaston, in spite of her serenely Christian principles, had been gradually growing green, and now she spoke with too evidently suppressed anger—

'I am not one of many words; indeed, as a rule, I am a silent woman, and——'

'My dear madam,' exclaimed Anstruther, interrupting her, 'silence is such an enchanting quality, so becoming to some people that we never wish to hear them speak. We would almost think it a blessing if they had been born dumb.'

'A doubtful compliment that,' said Mrs. Woollaston; 'but I was about to observe that Mr. Woollaston, being now married and, I trust, having his feet set in the right way, might be allowed to break from his old vicious associations and forget his old follies—but I cannot expect you to see with my eyes.'

'To speak metaphorically,' rejoined Anstruther, 'I am still in the valley while you are high up on the mountain of grace; well, I confess I am but a poor sinful bachelor, but by the time I have studied my friend's matrimonial felicity for a few days I shall be a reformed character.'

'The material for reformation is close at hand, old fellow,' exclaimed Woollaston, 'we have some charming society here on the Manor.'

'Some charming and some quite the reverse,' rejoined his lady, correctively. 'We don't associate promiscuously with our neighbours—we are very friendly and very select—poor insignificant worms though we are at best.'

'I see,' rejoined Anstruther, 'and each insignificant worm crawls on its own cabbage leaf and reviles with an unwormlike Christian spirit its fellow worm.'

You're a sort of happy family indeed—owls and eagles, cats, dogs, and monkeys, shut up together in this delightful rustic spot—you cannot get out without the aid of that gorgeous individual at the gate: he told me "there worn't no other way to get in nor no other way to get out," and he keeps the keys.'

'Charles! draw down the blind; those odious Forester girls are staring in at the window.' Anstruther glanced up and saw two heads withdrawn from a narrow window placed cornerwise, which gave direct down to the Woollaston dining-room. 'You see it is impossible to associate with everybody in a place like this,' added Mrs. Woollaston, waving her hand contemptuously towards the corner window; 'those people are atrociously vulgar, I suspect they've been in the patent match and blacking line; I know they water their flowers on the Sabbath day, and are abominably Low Church—so low, they might as well be no church at all.'

'Horrible accusation!' exclaimed Anstruther; 'I go in for High Church of the highest, hottest, strongest, undiluted spirit. "Candles!" is my rallying cry. Candles and banners, and why not drums, fifes, and trumpets, to lead the way to glory?'

'I don't go so far as that,' rejoined Mrs. Woollaston; 'I think there are limits even to our orthodox Christian duties. I don't go far beyond the candlesticks, provided the extinguishers are put on at the right time. By-the-by I shall be very happy to introduce you to our popular preacher, who will be sure to sanctify our combined croquet party with his presence to-morrow.'

'Combined croquet party!' exclaimed Anstruther, interrogatively.

'You don't understand the term. I'll explain it,' she answered: 'you see our private grounds are not very extensive, so a few of us—the *élite* of the place—combine and issue invitations to our several friends to meet on the public croquet ground of the Manor. In this way we have large, social, pleasant parties; but there is one drawback even to that; we cannot exclude our ill-bred, obtrusive neighbours, the ground being free to all, and it is not always agreeable to find, perhaps, your next door neighbour, whom you have *not* invited, marching in and out among the croquet players, scowling like an injured, reproachful, uninvited ghost; it is very unpleasant, but we put a good face on the matter.' Mr. Anstruther thought it required one, and he answered—

'I see you constitute yourselves into a sort of limited liability company dealing in genteelly united hospitalities, and wind up accounts when the entertainment is over—every man paying down on the nail.'

'That is not a very refined way of putting the matter,' said Mrs. Woollaston, 'though it is certainly original. I hope you'll join our party to-morrow,' she added, with a "smile that was childlike and bland." He accepted her invitation with pleasure, adding, 'I hope the Manorians will be on their best behaviour; remember a "chiel's among you taking notes."'

The lady retired, and Mr. Woollaston proposed that they should adjourn to the back garden and take coffee there. It was a small wedge-like piece of ground, like a slice cut out of a huge cheshire cheese, a piece of turf lay like a square of green baize in the middle, and a gravel path meandered round it, garnished with sweet herbs and parsley, which the presiding genius of the place considered

both ornamental and useful; it was enclosed by brick walls, and overlooked in sundry quarters by neighbours who might, or might not, be curiously inclined. Mr. Woollaston called this 'delightful seclusion.' Mr. Anstruther made a mental grimace, and thought you must outdo the 'make believe' of Dick Swiveller's marchioness to fancy any privacy at all. He would almost as soon have been marching round a prison-yard under a volley of hidden eyes as there; his imagination detected curious chambermaids and innumerable boys in buttons dodging behind window blinds and peering down upon them as they walked solemnly round.

'I say, old fellow!' exclaimed Woollaston, in a guttural whisper, 'don't talk out loud, for we are never quite sure of not being overheard—but you really must not go on so before Mrs. Woollaston. She is an admirable woman; a charming woman as you see, with wonderful depth and force of character and—adores *me*; but she has one weakness, a natural antipathy to pretty women. To couple the idea of a pretty woman with me either in the past, present, or future tense, is like shaking a red rag in the face of a mad bull; you would have had your dismissal on the spot if I had not told her you were heir to an earldom.'

'You did not tell her how far off, Charley,' laughed Anstruther. 'Well one ought to get some benefit out of one's aristocratic relations—but, my dear fellow, I'm sorry if I've done any damage—let us go in, and I'll try to repair it.'

'For heaven's sake, don't!' ex-

claimed Woollaston; 'if you attempt to tinker up one matter, you'll make a hole in another.'

'Nice opinion you've got of my discretionary powers,' replied Anstruther, as they returned to the house; and in the library found Mrs. Woollaston and coffee awaiting them. Having indulged in a little amiable chat, and played with a cup of coffee, Anstruther proposed that they should light a cigar and go out for a stroll. Mrs. Woollaston was aghast, and informed him that smoking 'was a vice unknown to Mr. Woollaston,' who never went out of an evening with his male companions. Anstruther saw that he had better go and enjoy his vicious luxury alone, as any attempt to gain the companionship of his friend would be frustrated by his matrimonial jailer; besides, he rather liked the idea of a solitary evening ramble—he wanted to rally his forces and have time to think—he had also a Quixotic notion of sallying forth to reconnoitre the Manor in search of the face that had fascinated him for the precise space of thirty-five minutes in the railway train. He strolled out with a vague, wandering idea of going down to the lodge, and striking up an intimacy with the resplendent Timmins, and getting from him an inventory of the live human stock of the Manor; puffing away at his cigar he strolled on.

'We never know what an hour may bring forth,' he thought; 'but at any rate I've had enough adventure and surprise for one day;' but the day was not yet over.

FRENCH NOVELISTS.

NO. V.—CHATEAUBRIAND.

FRANÇOIS RÉNÉ DE CHATEAUBRIAND is a literary celebrity about whom it is difficult to form an opinion. At one moment we think him effeminate and affected; at another, we fancy that no one has yet given him his due position. He is an imposing character, and yet incomplete. He is poetic, and yet not 'of imagination all compact,' as all lunatics, lovers, and poets ought to be. He is not a manly hero, in any Shakesperian sense; he is full of weaknesses, and in the delicate elegance of those weaknesses lies his strength. He is a writer — passionately enough too — on erotic subjects, but retains perfect dignity all the while; and is as far removed from the ordinary French novelists who write of love with paraffine, or distilled nitro-glycerine, or liquid fire instead of ink, as the 'wild nun,' of whom Mr. Swinburne treats, is different from a ballet-dancer. 'As the cross that a wild nun clasps till the edge of it bruises her bosom,' so was Chateaubriand's love. His nature was essentially that of a recluse, and he hugged his passion to his heart till it scorched him like a brand. Then in solitude he dreamed {over it till he fell into utter depths of despair. Finally he contemplated this despair of his from every possible point of view, and described it all with perfection of language. Besides being the delineator of love-sentiments, Chateaubriand writes a huge tome on the Christian religion; and in addition to being a preacher of Christianity, he has long been to France the prophet of morbidness and the apostle of ennui. This strange mortal also, with a

methodical array of proof which makes us almost believe in him, and a feminine jealousy which prevents us from believing in him altogether, claims, as a poetic influence, to have been the forerunner — nay, even the father of Byron. When we add to these already sufficiently curious qualifications, the fact that during his chequered existence he fought the fiend, poverty, in London, doing translations from the French for very scanty pay; that he was also a peer of France; that an English girl proposed marriage to him, and that he escaped with precipitation; that in Paris he is stated to have been the only man whom the great Napoleon feared; that he flung money away like a prodigal millionaire one day, and was a pauper the next,—it will be plain that we are looking upon a character sufficiently extraordinary to be interesting.

Chateaubriand was born in Brittany, that region of bigotry and old fashions. St. Malo has the honour of being his birth-place, and he first saw the light on the 4th September, 1768. Frenchmen always remember most accurately the localities where their celebrities are born, and so give an air of romance, or a touch of interest, to most of their towns. Twenty days before Chateaubriand's birth, Napoleon had stepped into the world. We can't fancy the latter appearing as a puling infant, but imagine the tramp of a military heel as he came into the midst of men. But even man-taming men are insignificant at one period of their lives, and dignified men undignified. Chateaubriand, for in-

stance, had all the majestic bearing of the old aristocratic *régime*; but he began life with some inopportune haste and unexpectedness in a kitchen, his mother being on her way upstairs from a walk. There was a tempest of the autumnal equinox on that day. The sound of the storm prevented the infant's cries from being heard, on which account, if it had been able to think at all at the time, it would probably have found the world as inexplicable a puzzle then as life afterwards proved to the man. The child was brought up in a gloomy castle, on the borders of the sea; and the melancholy murmurs of the Channel were about his early years. They seemed to be woven into his life, and the restless waves form no inadequate type of his mental condition—unquiet, unsatisfied, 'full of tears that he could not shed,' as he ever was. He took these breakers, himself, as an emblem of his life; and when mature in years, he was wont to say that there had not been a day when he failed to revisit in dream the austere rock whereon he was born, the tempest whose roar was about his earliest sleep. Other causes that acted upon his childhood tended to make him what he was. A frail child, elegant by instinct, and fastidious by constitution, he was put out to nurse in St. Malo, and for some years enjoyed little society, infantine or otherwise, save that of the small *gamins* of the place, the associates of the children of his nurse. His father was morose, cold, and proud, a man who inspired fear and no love; his mother is described as lively, but she was of the French kind of iveliness, and found equal pleasure in frivolous society and the devotions of the Church. When they met for dinner in his father's house, no one was allowed

to speak a word. Then the master of the house went out hunting, and Chateaubriand's mother retired to her oratory. The children had their books, or could play near the house till supper time. Then, after supper, the mother and children stood immovable and mute, watching the father make a promenade, backwards and forwards, always grave and taciturn, until ten o'clock, in the great hall. Directly the clock struck, he stopped his melancholy march, received icily his family's good-night, and retired; when all the rest must do the same.

This rigid gaoler of the domestic prison died when Chateaubriand was about eighteen, and at the Military Academy at Cambrai. After this event the youth went to Paris. On one occasion, in 1789, his sword was unsheathed against the mob; but alarmed by the popular excesses, he quitted the service on the occasion of the revolt.

Chateaubriand remained in Paris all that strange time before the revolution, but he belonged to no party. The aristocracy, feeling the approach of their end, rushed headlong into luxurious vice. Chateaubriand was cold and grave, and though he dined with them, was not of them; and he did not belong to the people. Perhaps all he cared for at this time—he was only twenty—was the applause which the small fry of literature bestowed upon his puerile verses. Had he been a few years older he would have seen what was going on.

When the Revolution came, he escaped from Paris. The nobility went to Coblenz: Chateaubriand departed for the United States.

The New World opened his eyes. 'Only figure to yourself,' says a French biographer, 'the astonishment of a literary man of the

18th century, at sight of that strange gigantic Nature, full of life, gracefully terrible. . . . Dropped among blue herons, rose-coloured flamingoes, red woodpeckers, Chateaubriand might well smile when he thought of that old French bird Philomèle, on which we live exclusively, ever since the mythologic era.' From travel in such regions of the New World, Chateaubriand gained a certain approach to nature and to real life which the old school of pedantry and classicism could not have opened to him. But the new bright-coloured garment never sat very well on the old-fangled dignity and tradition. Still his 'happy savages,' with their simple passions; and his attempt to write naturally, recommended him to those who might not otherwise have been drawn to him. Béranger, who disliked all borrowing from the ancients, and looked upon 'consul' and 'prefect' as worn-out, obsolete titles, that no one had wit enough to replace by new and suitable ones, was delighted to find a man who, when he wanted to speak of the sun, would speak of the sun and not of Phœbus; of the sea as the sea, and not as Neptune. Chateaubriand, nevertheless, never reached true simplicity. He has been styled a historic coin with the effigy of a by-gone age. In vain do modern manners, literary habits, all the precipitations of the new world, strive to cover the ancient type.

Chateaubriand soon returned from his American wanderings, reaching France early in 1792. 'Atala,' which was not published until some years after, was the result of his sojourn abroad. The publication of this manuscript produced quite a *furor*. We must remember that at that time scarcely any graphic pen had been brought to bear upon life in the wilds of

America. Cooper had not appeared as the pioneer of Western Romance; so Chateaubriand had a new field to himself.

'Atala,' apart from its Indian accessories, is composed of about equal parts of mystic Catholicism and passionate love. The love is never gratified: the Catholicism is. At least the priests seem to have it all their own way in the end; and Atala, who had loved so intensely, and had poisoned herself in terror of breaking the vow of virginity which her mother had imposed upon her, undergoes a most ecstatic celebration with the wafer and holy oil. The scenes of this book are most sentimentally sad; perhaps in this rational age they would not affect us with so deep a sense of solemnity and reality as they inspired in those who were more subject to the influence of the spirit of the devotee. We feel a certain sense of narrowness in contemplating these scenes; we seem still to see in them the gloomy shore that was the birth-place of our Breton gentleman. We do not see the broad world, or any Shakespearian grandeur. The emotion is intense, but circumscribed. But we must remember that Chateaubriand despised Shakespeare, who took his characters from such low places as taverns, and made them talk sometimes only like men. Chateaubriand praises Voltaire for retracting his praise of Shakespeare, and speaks of him as repenting for having 'opened the door to mediocrity, deified the drunken savage, and placed the monster on the altar.' 'Hamlet' Chateaubriand called, 'that tragedy of lunatics.' In return, it has been pertinently asked, what would Shakespeare have called 'Moïse,' that tragedy of Chateaubriand's.

Chateaubriand is rather fond of

disparaging great men; he considers himself, as we have said, the poetic father of Byron, and certainly brings forward some singular coincidences between their writings. Byron, on the other hand, whether conscious of this jealousy or not, evidently does not seek to exalt Chateaubriand. He rather speaks of him slightly, as when, in 'The Age of Bronze,' referring to the incongruous Congress, he says:—

'There Chateaubriand forms new books
of martyrs;
And subtle Greeks intrigue for stupid
Tartars.'

In his notes to this poem, Byron, too, brings in an anecdote most disrespectful for a son to quote against his reputed literary papa: 'Monsieur Chateaubriand, who has not forgotten the author in the minister, received a handsome compliment at Verona from a literary sovereign: "Ah! Monsieur C—, are you related to that Chateaubriand who—who—has written *something?*" (*écrit quelque chose!*). It is said that the author of "Atala" repented him for a moment of his legitimacy.'

With Milton, also, Chateaubriand compares himself: 'Milton served Cromwell; I have combated Napoleon: he attacked kings; I have defended them: he hoped nothing from their pardon; I have not reckoned upon their gratitude. Now that in both our countries monarchy is declining towards its end, Milton and I have no more political questions to squabble about.' These comparisons are, at least, foolish, for Milton and Byron may chance to outlive Chateaubriand. The work of Chateaubriand's in which the largest reference is made to Byron is the 'Sketches of English Literature,' a book written by him somewhat late in life. In the

memoirs of his younger days, he mentions him too. Chateaubriand was at one time, soon after his return from America, a resident in England. He was in poor circumstances, and was glad to make a scanty income by translations from the French, and any literary work that might turn up. At this time he speaks of himself as having been corporeally very close to Byron: 'In his melancholy rambles he was seen passing through the village of Harrow at the time when the lively face and curly head of a boy—Lord Byron—frequently appeared at the window of a school.' Whether the curly-headed boy was actually seen by the impecunious French exile, or not, does not matter much: it may be interesting, however, to note what claim the Frenchman prefers against that naughty English boy. Chateaubriand first draws a parallel between Byron and himself:—'I was destined to precede him in the career of letters, and to remain in it after him. He had been brought up on the heaths of Scotland, on the seashore, as I had been on the heaths of Brittany, on the seashore. He was at first fond of the Bible and Ossian, as I was fond of them. He sang, in Newstead Abbey, the recollections of childhood, as I sang them in the Castle of Courbourg.' Personal as well as literary coincidences, it will be observed, are brought forward by our injured Chateaubriand. The next of these which he brings before our notice is, that Byron and himself—the former in 1807, the latter seven or eight years earlier—both sat under the self-same elm tree in Harrow churchyard, to meditate or make verses. 'Hail ancient elm of dreams,' says Chateaubriand, 'at the foot of which Byron, as a boy, indulged the caprices of his age, at the

time when I was pondering on "Réné" in the shade, in that same shade to which the poet subsequently repaired, in turn, to ponder on "Childe Harold." Chateaubriand then proceeds with his comparison, as follows:—"Some interest will perhaps be felt on remarking in future—if I am destined to have any future—the coincidence presented by the two leaders of the new French and English schools, having one and the same fund of ideas, and destinies, if not manners, nearly similar: the one a peer of England, the other a peer of France; both travellers in the East, at no great distance of time from each other, but who never met. The only difference is, that the life of the English poet was not mixed up with such great events as mine." From a man possessed of such bad taste and morbid contemplation of self as to include himself in such a comparison as this, it is easy to understand that Byron, if he fell under his influence, might have acquired much of his own melancholy egotism. But Byron never descended to such puerilities as this coincidence-making of Chateaubriand's. The former may have had unhealthy cravings for present and future fame, personal affectations, and self-devouring introspection, but at least he did not display them in so childish a fashion as Chateaubriand. When he comes to treat of coincidences purely literary between himself and Byron the Frenchman becomes more precise. 'Lord Byron,' he says, 'went to visit after me the ruins of Greece. In "Childe Harold" he seems to embellish with his own colours the descriptions of my "Travels." At the commencement of my pilgrimage I introduced the farewell of Sire de Joinville to his castle: Byron, in

like manner, bids adieu to his Gothic habitation.' . . . 'In the "Martyrs" Endorus sets out from Messenia to proceed to Rome. 'Our voyage,' he says, 'was long. We saw all those promontories marked by temples or tombs. . . . We crossed the Gulf of Megara. Before us was Ægina, on the right the Piræus, on the left Corinth. Those cities, of old so flourishing, exhibited only heaps of ruins. The very sailors appeared to be moved by this sight. The crowd collected upon the deck kept silence: each fixed his eye steadfastly on those ruins: each perhaps drew from them in secret a consolation in his misfortunes by reflecting how trifling are our own afflictions compared with those calamities which befall whole nations, and which had stretched before our eyes the corpses of those cities. . . . My young companions had never heard of any metamorphoses other than those of Jupiter, and could not account for the ruins before their eyes. I, for my part, had already seated myself with the prophet on the ruins of desolate cities, and Babylon taught me what had happened to Corinth.' So far Chateaubriand's description, as extracted from his book. 'Now,' says he, triumphantly, 'turn to the fourth canto of Lord Byron's "Childe Harold!" We turn to stanza 44, and read as follows:—

'Wandering in youth, I traced the path
of him,
The Roman friend of Rome's least
mortal mind,
The friend of Tully: as my bark did
skim
The bright blue waters with a fan-
ning wind,
Came Megara before me, and behind
Ægina lay, Piræus on the right,
And Corinth on the left; I lay reclined
Along the prow, and saw all these unite
In ruin, even as he had seen the desolate
sight.'

Those who compare this stanza with the passage in prose above quoted will be able to judge whether Byron is to be deemed debtor to Chateaubriand, or not. We offer, as a suggestion, that Chateaubriand and Byron dipped into the same 'Murray,' supposing there existed sixty years ago such a guide-book to Greece. Chateaubriand, however, does not take this view of the matter, but enters upon a small rhapsody thereupon, wherein is most delicately insinuated the suspicious circumstance of two persons having made use of the same words on the same subject. He says, with some pedantry: 'Here the English poet, as well as the French prose-writer, falls short of the letter of Sulpicius to Cicero; but so complete a coincidence is singularly glorious for me, since I preceded the immortal bard on the shore where the same reflections occurred to both, and where we both have commemorated the same ruins.' Byron has had sufficient detractors of late; but as Chateaubriand makes it evident that he himself is the inferior man (for would Byron have condescended to such affected self-measurement?) there is no harm in continuing the comparison, and listening to the pretended plagiarisms. Chateaubriand proceeds: 'I have likewise the honour of agreeing with Lord Byron in the description of Rome. The "Martyrs," and my "Letter on the Campagna" of Rome, claim for me the inestimable advantage of having anticipated the inspirations of a great genius. M. de Béranger, our immortal songwriter, has inserted in the last volume of his "Chansons" a note, too flattering to me to be quoted entire. In adverting to the impulse which, according to him, I have given to French poetry, he says: 'The influence of the author

of the "Génie de Christianisme" has been equally felt abroad; and it would, perhaps, be but just to say that the bard of "Childe Harold" belongs to the family of "Réné."'

The next opinion in his favour which Chateaubriand brings before us is that of a French critic, M. Villemain. The former note was said to be too flattering to quote entire: for quoting this one Chateaubriand craves forgiveness, begs the reader to excuse him, and to reckon for nothing praise bestowed through the indulgence of talent. He then quotes from an article, on Lord Byron, as follows: 'Some incomparable pages of "Réné" had, it is true, exhausted his poetic character.' Upon which Chateaubriand, with shy air of patronage, comments thus: 'I know not whether Byron imitated or renewed them by his genius.'

We will leave Béranger, who looked upon Chateaubriand with pity as a superior man who had lost his way. And let us turn to 'Réné,' perhaps the most famous work of its author. 'Réné' has taken such hold of the French mind that the Parisian, *ennuyé* as that effervescent animal so frequently is, calls his melancholy disorder 'maladie de Réné.' The 'family of Réné' comprises all those who indulge in morbid questionings of life, whose nerves are restless rather than healthy, who find the great gift of existence 'slow' rather than joyful. Such a state as this, the condition, as it were, of those who have not strength to grasp the nettle of life, or health enough to gain a mastery of its meanings, we would rather let France enjoy the credit of producing than England. Let Chateaubriand be the parent of the moping element in Byron: Byron has yet a glory and a strength which are not Chateaubriand.

Réné is weary of all things: of glory and genius, of work and leisure, of prosperity and misfortune alike. Everything bores him: he drags along, as he constantly tells us, his days chained to a burden of *ennui*: his life is a yawn. The fact was Chateaubriand never found his place in life: he was always, as Béranger well put it, *égaré*. He had too much brain to believe in the old-fashioned monarchy, with its inglorious caterpillar kings; he was too great a *seigneur* to identify himself with the people; there was no patriote in France ready for him to enter, and suitable to his dreams. And so existence became to him an abyss, which something was always wanted to fill. The prophet of morbidness and the apostle of *ennui* we have styled him. What name else can we give him, as the author of dreariness, like the sayings that follow:—‘At length my heart could furnish no resources for my mind, and I was only sensible of existence by an oppressive feeling of fatigue and uneasiness.’ . . . ‘It is much better that we should resemble, in a small degree, the generality of mankind, in order that we may be a little less unhappy.’ Or this:—‘When really unhappy, I had no longer any wish for death. My grief was become a kind of occupation which took up every moment of my time.’ The pity of it is, that there has grown up a sickly family with the cowardly and mawkish ideas of Réné for philosophy. Here is another sample of Chateaubriand’s helpless and woe-begone creed: ‘The many examples we have before us, and the multitudes of books we possess, give us knowledge without experience; we are undeceived before we have enjoyed; there still remain desires but no illusions. Our imagination is rich, abundant,

and full of wonders; but our existence is poor, insipid, and destitute of charms. With a full heart we dwell in an empty world, and scarcely have we advanced a few steps when we have nothing to learn.’ With all respect to Chateaubriand, we venture to contradict every separate assertion of his maudlin creed. Life deceives none but fools; if you pluck a cherry, it remains a cherry in your mouth, and does not turn to bitter dust on the palate, as cheerless Chateaubriand would make believe. ‘Desires without illusions’—the very best thing possible. And no ‘full heart,’ or rich imagination can see the world empty around it: ‘tis a meagre heart and a barren imagination that cries out the unsuggestiveness and desolation of the world. Matthew Arnold, and Tennyson, and William Morris, are all, more or less, of the English ‘family of Réné!’ Let us turn for a moment to another poet, happily an Englishman, who laughs at the querulous children of despair. Perhaps he is thinking of Chateaubriand when he says, in the ‘Secret of Long Life:’—‘To him’ (the supreme poet) ‘life is not by any means a “long unhappy dream,” . . . an idea worthy of a Frenchman or a fool.’ Again:—‘The Greeks knew better. Their poet was Apollo, the divinity of sunshine and strength, and youth and love. Fancy Apollo in need of “hourly varied anodynes,” . . . one day the melancholy verse of Tennyson, and another, the distraught prose of Carlyle . . . one day Holloway’s pills, and another old Dr. Jacob Townsend’s sarsaparilla. . . . I say that, to the true poet and to the brave man, this world is full to the brim of happiness, and that the future is as certain as the truthfulness of God.’

We have said enough of Cha-

teaubriand's productions from a philosophical point of view: there is scarcely, however, any other view to be taken of his romances which have scarcely any plot, but rely for their charm upon their exquisite elegance of style, and the manner in which morbid sadness is made beautiful by polish.

Chateaubriand returned to France when Napoleon was Consul, and he soon rose considerably above his position in London as hack-translator. His mother died in 1798, with a prayer on her lips for the conversion of her son, whose melancholy had taken the form of scepticism. This longing of hers, it is said, produced the 'Genius of Christianity,' which was published in 1802, a year after the appearance of 'Atala.' The 'Genius of Christianity' was looked upon as something that the weak faith of Frenchmen might lean upon; and Chateaubriand became looked up to as a power. Napoleon made him his minister, but the two never agreed very well. Chateaubriand had a high-handed way of saying what he thought, and found himself ill able to conform to the wishes of a superior. The Breton gentleman never relinquished his aristocratic dignity. When he was offered the 'Academy,' his address was found to be a protest against revolution and despotism. It is said to have made Napoleon ask bitterly:—'Am I then nothing more than a usurper?' He feared the man who would never bend to bribe or flattery. Though brought up in royalist ideas, and strongly impregnated with the old aristocratic sentiment, Chateaubriand preferred democracy to despotism. 'Had France formed herself into a republic,' he says, 'I would have gone with her, for there would have been reason and consistency in the fact; but to exchange a

crown preserved in the treasury of St. Denis for a crown that has been picked up—that is not worth a perjury.' No wonder that Napoleon had no love to spare for the most powerful man in France after himself, when he spoke in this outspoken manner, and threw the appointments offered him in the imperial teeth. When the crown fell that has been 'picked up' so often and fallen so often, and the allied armies entered France in 1814, Chateaubriand's work, 'Bonaparte et les Bourbons,' was worth an army to Louis XVIII.: he was made Minister of the Interior and a member of the House of Peers. This peerage he relinquished in 1830, after protesting against the casting out of the elder branch of the Bourbon family in favour of Louis Philippe. Here again this singular Chateaubriand was dangerously isolated, being, as he tells us, 'a monarchist from conviction, a Bourbonist from honour, and a republican by nature.' Pitt's saying: 'My ambition is character, not office,' has been applied to him, and is reasonably fitting.

Now that we have considered Chateaubriand in his literary and political capacities, we will look at him for a moment in his domestic relations.

Chateaubriand loved to patronize, and was one of the earliest admirers of Victor Hugo. He sent for the poet while quite a boy, to see him, and paid him a very high compliment on some passages of an ode which he had written. The youth was rather frightened by his pompous and haughty manner. However, on one visit that M. Hugo paid him, this feeling was somewhat modified, for as they were sitting together a servant opened the door and brought in an immense

bucket of water. Chateaubriand loosened his cravat, and began taking off his green morocco slippers. Young Hugo naturally rose to take his leave, probably deeming that no hint could be stronger than this. It was not, however, meant as a hint at all, for the great man would not let him go, but went on undressing as if no one were present. He removed his grey swan-skin pantaloons, his shirt, and his flannel-waistcoat—(French descriptions, it will be observed, are partial to detail)—and got into the big tub where he was washed by his servant. After being dried and dressed, he cleaned his teeth, which were notably beautiful, and for the care of which he kept a whole case of dentist's instruments. After this little episode was over, Chateaubriand, greatly revived by his splashing about in the water, began a most animated conversation, interrupting it occasionally to give his teeth another touch with the brush. After this, Victor Hugo did not look upon Chateaubriand's haughty dignity with so much fear.

The author of 'Réné' is described as follows: 'M. de Chateaubriand affected a military style; the man of the pen could not forget the man of the sword. His neck was imprisoned in a black cravat which hid the collar of his shirt; a black greatcoat, buttoned all the way up, confined his little stooping body. His head was the finest part of him; it was disproportioned to his height, but it was a noble-looking, serious head. His nose was long and straight, his eye keen, his smile bewitching, but it came and went with the rapidity of lightning, and his mouth would quickly resume its haughty, severe expression.

Madame de Chateaubriand was very charitable, and maintained

an infirmary for sick priests. As it cost her more than the money she possessed to effect this, she had a chocolate manufactory, and sold the produce to her friends by the pound. The price was rather dear, we are told. Victor Hugo was once asked to purchase a pound of it, and, in his youthful enthusiasm, said at once that he would take three. He did so, but when the operation of paying for it was over, he had nothing left in his purse. Chateaubriand, too, was the reverse of miserly with regard to money. He was plunged in debt, but was always ready to be charitable. He kept a pile of five-franc pieces on the mantel-piece of his dining-room; and whenever his servant brought him a begging letter, which was not seldom, he would approach the pile, grumble, and wrap up a piece or two in a paper, which he would send out by the servant. He was once visiting Charles X. while in exile at Prague, and the ex-king made inquiries as to his fortune. 'I am as poor as a rat,' answered Chateaubriand, 'and hail-fellow-well-met with all Madame de Chateaubriand's protégés.' 'Oh, that won't do,' replied the king. 'Come, Chateaubriand, how much would it take to make you a rich man?' 'Twould be a loss of time, Sire,' replied the great author, who appeared to be quite resigned to a position of impecuniosity; 'were you to give me four millions this morning, I should not have a sous left by to-night.'

A moping philosopher, a powerful minister, a jealous poet, a dignified aristocrat, an honest politician, an easy-going spendthrift, an upholder of Christianity, and a popular novelist, all rolled into one; Chateaubriand is a sort of human kaleidoscope, and somewhat interesting to look into.

KENINGALE COOK.

TIME FLIES!

A RONDÉL.

TIME flies! The laggard lover, absent still,
 Compels thine eyes to rove against their will—
 Roaming from Poetry's entrancing page,
 To note the clock, whose minutes seem an age,
 So slow the hands revolve before thine eyes—

Although Time flies!

Thy grief is not because thou must deplore
 Thy favourite opera's first act is o'er,
 That thou must miss, at its first luscious note,
 The nightingale that dwells in Lucca's throat,—
 Ah, no! 'tis not for this thy tears arise,

Because Time flies!

Alas! to you it seemeth Love's decay
 That he, who swore to love, remains away.
 What are the spells that keep him from thy side?
 What are the clouds that from his vision hide,
 (While thou art wasting weary hours in sighs)?

How fast Time flies!

Hush! there's a footstep on the outer stair!
 His footfall's music, and thou know'st the air.
 He comes, he comes—the loiterer too dear!
 Minutes—how flee they now that he is here!
 Farewell, regret! each doubting fancy dies!

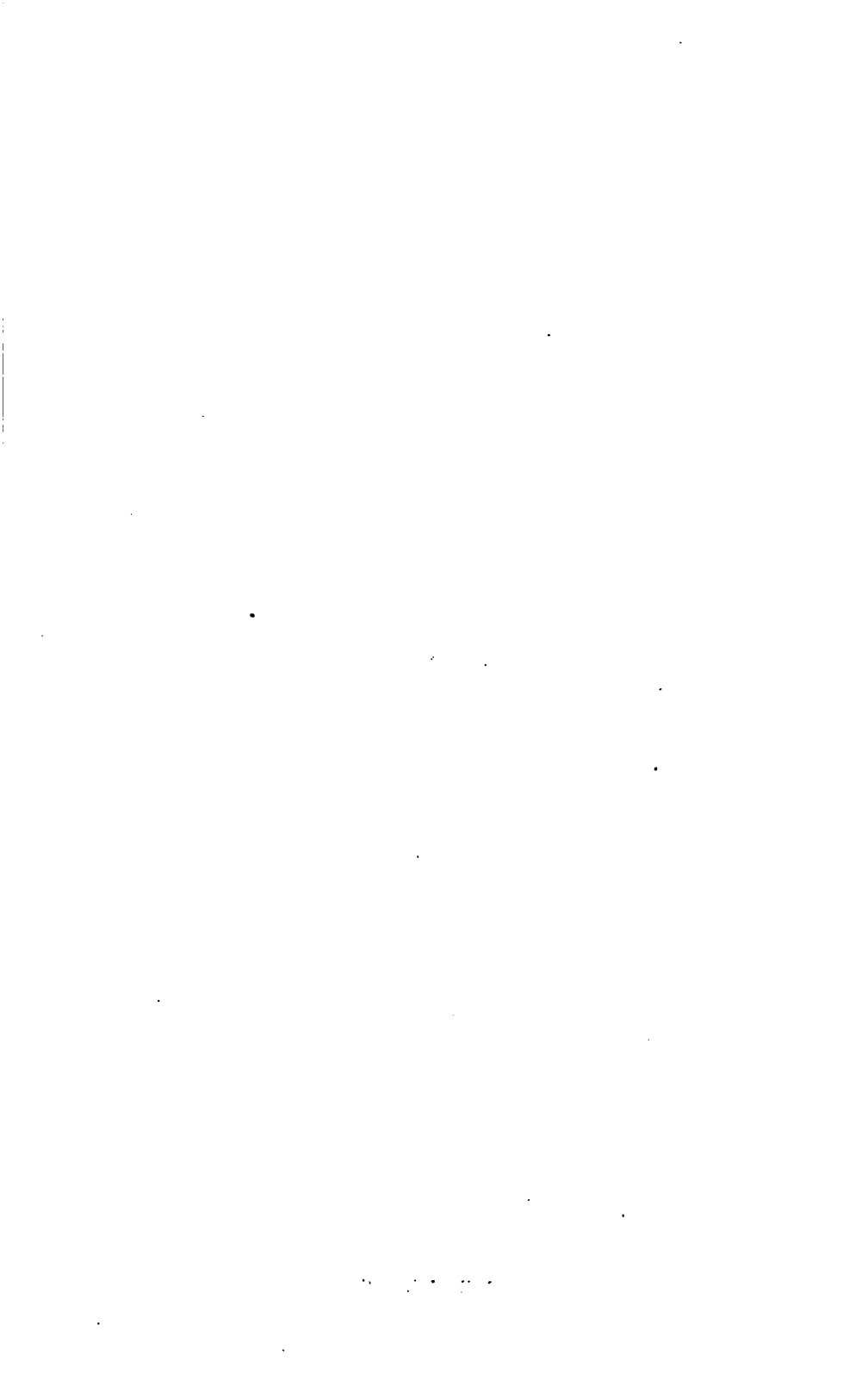
Time flies! Time flies!

TOM HOOD.



TIME FLIES.

[See Page 22.]



ANTOINE WIERTZ.

A Sketch.

IT is strange that, despite the thousands and tens of thousands of English travellers who with the summer sun fly yearly southward and westward to the plain of the Rhine, to the waters of Germany, to the cities of Italy, and to the Alpine passes of Switzerland, very few amongst them ever pause, or even seem to know that there is aught worth pausing for, in the green solitudes and Shakespeare-haunted forests of the Ardennes. Yet there are few districts in Europe more full of beauty and of poetry; few more worthy the loving and lingering interest of the wanderer; few indeed, perhaps none, in which the long dreamy days of a late summer time can be more deliciously spent beneath the shadow of green leaves.

The bright Meuse river is fresher far than the Rhine, and its scenery is far less monotonous, for after all, vaunted though the Rhenish banks may be, they are tedious in their continuous likeness one to the other and in their wearisome repetition of the same little burghs mirrored in the same brown stretch of water, and of the same vine-streaked grey slopes crowned with the same eternal grey ruins.

The forests of the Ardennes, again, are even still in certain districts much what they were in the days of Jacques and Roalind; and are still haunted by wild animals that find there a refuge denied to them in the superb Teutonic woods which are over-sedulously preserved and cultivated. Nothing can be lovelier in their way than the old pic-

turesque towns that the Meuse washes as it flows; than the charming villages girdled with their meadows of deep grass and shaded with trees ancient as the hills; than the roads that plunge down through ravine and woodland, while the Flemish horses thunder along, striking sweet music from their many bells; than the deep purple of the stretches of pine and the black masses of rock and forest that rise against the blue serene sky at noonday when all is still; than the paths that wind on for ever and for ever through the intense shades where only here and there a gleam of light can faintly strike even at the meridian through the delicious obscurity of the impenetrable leaves; nothing can be lovelier, fresher, fuller of the charm of silence and the poetry of the past.

Break from the common haunts and habits; leave the great crowded highways of travel; go to some old quiet town, Dinant, or Rochefort, or Stavelôt; pass your hours in the great forests with no sound to stir the stillness of it all except some murmur from the bees, some clear tinkle from a goat's bell, some rush of water half unseen, some echo of a convent chime far, very far, away; stay there in the long August days, when a white harvest-moon will light you on your homeward way along the pine-shadowed roads, stay there with no book except your Shakespeare, and say if something of the old long-lost mediæval delights of forest-life do not return to you in the Shakespearean shadows of the Ardennes?

But there is another beside Shakespeare whom you will remember in the Ardennes; your remembrance will be also Antoine Wiertz.

Are there many to whom his name is yet as an empty sound, telling nothing? I fear so; he gave his whole life for fame; and yet fame has only shed upon him a fitful and incomplete lustre.

His name is as a planet which only the eyes and lips of those educated in his science can turn to and can name; it is not yet that pole-star in the heavens of Art which every child can call and point out in familiarity and exultation. Is this the fault of Wiertz or of the world?

It is a delicate question; some will say one some the other. For myself I cannot doubt that if Wiertz had lived in the days of Rubens he would have had the fame of Rubens. But he fell upon evil times: very evil times, for an art that is purely idealic and invariably free; and this was the art of Wiertz always.

In the very heart of the Ardennes, at Dinant, the old grey town upon the river, Antoine Wiertz was born in the year 1806, amongst the poorest of the poor, with the miseries of extreme poverty as his sole heritage. Against every difficulty and in the face of every wretchedness he became a great, a supremely great, artist; yet in the century which has seen both his birth and his death, it may be questioned if many beyond those of his own nation, and the sincere students of art in all countries, have visited the ivy-shrouded building on the outskirts of Brussels which enshrines all the rarest fruitage of a most rare mind.

'Comme caractère d'artiste Wiertz est le type le plus parfait le plus complet. Il est l'image,

le symbole, la personification de le caractère.' This has been written of him by one who loved him well, but none the less is it intrinsically true.*

Wiertz was essentially the ideal artist. His life from first to last was consecrated to one passion, and that passion—Art.

In the days of his earliest youth he repulsed the money offered to him for one of his studies. 'Gardez votre or,' he cried, as he refused his patron. 'C'est la mort de l'artiste!' And on his death-bed, exhausted by physical agonies of the direst sort, his art never once lost its dominion over him: 'Oh les beaux horizons!' he murmured in his delirium. 'Oh les belles et douces figures! Vite-vite! Ma palette—mes pinceaux! Vite!—je tiens mes points de lumière. Quel tableau je vais faire. Oh je veux vaincre Raffael!'

Modern society sees little but an absurd quixotism, no doubt, in the painter who habitually refused to sell his pictures on the ground that if he once sold them he would never again be wholly free, and also that he needed to retain his works beside him for his own correction and education. Yet who can dispute that this sentiment, exaggerated though it may have been, was yet of the highest order, and of a value not to be measured in an age wherein every genius is debased by avarice and prostituted to the ends of gain.

When the learning and the influence of Athens were at their greatest height her sages took no payments, and her schools were free; from the time that Isocrates accepted money from each pupil and all the philosophers followed his example the glory of Athens began to wane. Art is like Athens;

* Dr. A. Watteau, of Brussels, whom I here beg to thank for his courtesy and kindness.

worldly prudence in her teachers means spiritual decay in her empire.

Wiertz, convinced of this truth, consecrated himself to its dominion with an absolute self-devotion in which his generation saw little except insanity. It has a singular beauty, this asceticism for the sake of art, this self-negation which repulsed all pleasures and all profits that other men deem so dear; and it has a bitter sadness and irony in it likewise, for its influence upon his time may be termed almost wholly fruitless. In the mediæval days of Italy, with Bandinelli and Perugino, with Orcagna and Del Sarto, Wiertz would have been revered, adored, followed, whether to the Calvary or to the Golgotha of Art. In the nineteenth century he stood absolutely alone, and all men held aloof from him; with its aims he had no sympathy, with its temper no affinity; it is full of the 'infinitely little;' of impersonal desires it has no conception, its one measuring rod is of gold, and all its productions are dwarfed to the popular standard; into such an age Wiertz came a Titan amidst its poor humanity. Of necessity the Titan was everlastingly assailed, of a necessity everlastingly alone.

This in itself would have mattered little; he had the genius which awaits martyrdom, and grows greatest beneath its shadow; the unutterable regret which stirs in every student of his life and works is the regret that this genius has hitherto, at the least, been almost entirely barren of result in its influence upon the century in which it was begotten.

'La posterité admirera à travers les âges deux noms flamboyants Rubens et Wiertz,' writes his greatest friend, Watteau. But will it be so?

Justice may come with time; like vengeance, though it halt, it is sure of foot soon or late; but at the present time his influence is but slightly felt, and for tens of thousands who know familiarly the names of Leys, Gallait, Verboeckhoeven, and other of his countrymen, there are often not ten who know the incomparably worthier name of Antoine Wiertz.

This man was great from his youngest years. At ten he painted all he saw by the sheer instinct of art, never having received instruction of any sort; at twelve he engraved on wood and printed off what he engraved, none having ever shown him the method of the work; it has been well said that if at fifteen Pascal *invented* geometry, at twelve Wiertz *invented* drawing and engraving. At fourteen the boy who had beheld nothing in art but the poor pictures of his parish church, heard of Rubens, and knew no rest by night or day until he set forth upon a pilgrimage to the city, which is at once the birth-place, the tomb, and the apotheosis of Rubens.

No one can be said to know Rubens in any sense until that pilgrimage to Antwerpen has been made, but being once thus known, the masculine majesty, the leonine strength, the impassioned radiance of Rubens' genius binds the pilgrim to worship them for evermore. It needs no record to tell us how they entranced and subjugated the mind of the young Ardennais until the humility of his homage for his mighty master became united to the resolve, which all his life long never left him, to create a picture which should be not unworthy to hang between the Descent and the Elevation of the Cross.

This homage and this resolve together chained him long in that

old strange town whose every stone seems to bear and every bell to chime the name of Rubens. The tale of his life in Antwerpen is of the strangest and most pathetic; it may go with the histories of Chatterton, of Gilbert, and of Hegesippe Moreau. He had nothing in the world except two hundred *florins* yearly which the government allowed him for his promise as an art student. He inhabited a sort of den in a corner of a granary, where in winter the cold was so intense that his beard was often frozen to the wall, against which stood his miserable bed, whilst the cell itself was so small that being of tall stature he could never hold himself upright in it.

Yet in this prison he remained many years; peopling it with myriads of his beautiful imaginations, working all day at his easel and at night studying anatomy and chemical science, or filling his solitude with a wild charivari of music of his own creation, which was at once so melodious and so terrible that the affrighted people, listening in the streets without, were certain that the sounds came from hell itself.

Thus he remained for half a score of years, dwelling in a passionate ecstacy of spiritual life and in the most complete wretchedness of physical existence. It was during this time that he rejected a price for his pictures on the plea that gold was the murderer of art.

From Antwerpen he went to study in Paris, thence to Rome; still poor as the poorest and succoured during illness at the hospital of the poor. From Rome, having steeped his mind in the wondrous lustre of Italian air and of Italian art, he sent to his own country as the fruits of his exile that 'Death of Patrocles,' in which

his genius reached its perihelion, which he never afterwards surpassed and perhaps never afterwards equalled.

The cost for carriage of this immense canvas—it is thirty feet in length—amounted to 500*f.*; the Academy, aghast, refused to pay it, and were about to leave the painting to its fate, in the hold of the ship, when a Fleming, whose name deserves eternal record, one Van Bree, struck with the magnificence of the Homeric conflict, paid the harbour dues and redeemed the 'Patrocles' for Belgium.

It was always the intention of Wiertz to repaint this great subject; death came to him with the intention unachieved; but it must be doubted whether he could ever have rivalled himself in it successfully. The canvas seems to breathe the very soul of Homer. The Menelaus, with his eyes aflame, and his beard blown by the fierce breaths of war; the beautiful nude body stretched amidst them, dissected as by a troop of lions and a pack of wolves; the young son of Panthus, who falls beneath the steel like a young olive-tree beneath the axe; the perfection of the anatomy, the life and haste and majestic ferocity of the conflict; the innumerable tones given in the palpitating flesh of the living warriors, and the bruised pallor of the fallen dead; the whole conception of the composition, into which a passionate love and instinct for the Homeric age, has been poured in a flood of heroic feeling: all these together form a work upon which, surely, none can look without emotion, and by which Wiertz may be said, without arrogance or presumption, to have accomplished the ambition of his life—*de luttet contre Rubens*.

Those who go to it, fresh from

that cathedral where Rubens, in his two masterpieces, fills the whole temple with his glory, will not find the 'Patrocles' either poor or pale. That the majestic strength of Rubens can ever find its full equal in any, or his lustre of colour in any, is still to be doubted; but that, of modern painters, Wiertz does, in strength of execution and power of hue, come the highest to his master, can hardly be disputed by any one who has studied long and thoughtfully in that strange Museum of which Henri Conscience has now direction.*

That Wiertz is great there can, then, be no doubt: great in the heroic force and the pathetic majesty of the 'Patrocles,' great in the Titanic fury and the voluptuous terror of the 'Revolt of Hell,' great in the exquisite ideality and sublime aspiration of the 'Triumph of Christ'—the most purely spiritual, the most intrinsically divine picture of modern times.

Great, too, certainly, in lesser things than these. See the marvellous flesh-colour, the intense *living* look, the anatomical perfection of the 'Bouton de Rose.' See the grace and the coy play of fancy in the 'Brune et Blonde,' in the 'Chair au Canon,' in the 'Plus Philosophique qu'on ne pense,' see the voluptuous loveliness of the 'Lisense de Romans'—the soft golden limbs, the dreamy languor of *poes*, the physical exuberance of life, and the subtle, deadly meaning that steals, like a snake, through it all; nay, see even such slighter things as the dog curled sleeping in his niche, and the concierge dozing at his

post; and in any and in all of these the artist is great, supremely and undeniably great: the greatest, one is disposed to say, of any who have arisen in this country, not even excepting Ingres and Ary Scheffer. But with this persuasion of the splendour of his powers, and our knowledge of the unsparing loyalty to his art which actuated him from first to last, how is it—we are irresistibly forced to ask ourselves—how is that the impress of Wiertz upon his own times has been so altogether disproportionate to the might of his strength?

His life was given up to art. The same austerity and purity of purpose which made him, when a student at Antwerpen, reject the gold of the amateur; still influenced him in mature manhood to repulse three hundred thousand francs, tendered by a foreign patron, for the 'Triomphe des Christ.' 'Je ne puis vendre mon tableau,' he answered, 'car demain j'y peux trouver quelque chose à corriger.'

The anecdote is not exaggerated or apocryphal; it comes to me on the undoubted authority of one who dwelt with him for many years in closest brotherhood, and loved him well; and it is typical of the whole tenor and temper of Wiertz's lifetime. His art was his *cultus*, and it was sacred to him beyond any other thing; to it he was content to sacrifice all lusts of the flesh and all desires of the eye; for it he abjured wealth and all its attendant pleasures; his whole existence was consecrated to one idea alone, the culture of the genius in him and the worship of the twin sciences of colour and of form, to whose mysteries he surrendered all the years of his youth and his manhood.

He was accused, oftentimes, of arrogance and of vanity, be-

* Henri Conscience, the Flemish poet and novelist, whose charming romances have done much to preserve from oblivion all the peculiar idiosyncracies of Flemish peasant and burgher life.

cause he waged eternal warfare against the petty *doctrinaires* of criticism, and against what may be very justly called the pernicious influence of journalism upon Arts and Letters; but, in truth, no man was humbler or more reverent before the true masters of his art. It was his incessant demand, that in the midst of the exhibitions of modern pictures there should be always hung some Rubens, some Raffaello, some Tiziano; so that the aspirants of the present might be able to measure themselves with the giants of the past. His sayings and his writings teem with expressions and declarations of his homage for the chiefs of art, and with his unalterable conviction, that endless labour and patience were as needful as genius itself to the production of any really great creation. If ever there were a mind penetrated with the knowledge that 'la plus grande science est de savoir que nous ne savons rien,' that mind was the mind of Wiertz.

Also, a stoical indifference, or, rather, an absolute abhorrence of the money-profits, to which art is so repeatedly sacrificed, characterised his career from first to last. 'Ce que tue le caractère de l'artiste c'est le marchandage,' was his profound persuasion in all times.

'Tout foyer de conception,' he wrote, 'qui fait de l'art sublime une vile marchandise est un cancer au sein de l'humanité.' This was his faith; and to it no temptation ever succeeded in making him untrue.

He was fully convinced that his 'genius was obligation,' 'Je progresse chaque jour je dois donc toujours trouver dans le présent à corriger dans le passé.' This was his doctrine. He would not traffic in his creations, because

they were to him utterly imperfect; and yet precious to him, as no treasure for which he could have bartered them could ever have been.

Now, however exaggerated this asceticism of conduct may have been, its value cannot—as I have said earlier—be over-estimated in an age whose errors are all in a totally opposite and far baser direction; the very unlikeness of it to the generation which he was amidst, making its rarity, made its value. It is, therefore, the more painfully perplexing, why the influence of such a character has been almost imperceptible upon his century.

Indeed, to behold this noble and undebased life spent in one continual conflict, one perpetual aspiration, and then to be compelled to admit that, for every tangible purpose, it was all but wasted, and that, for any actual good produced by it, it might as well have been spent in the slough of vice or in the degradation of traffic, is one of those terrible and despairing facts which meet the thinker at every turn in life, and make him cry aloud, in the bitterness of his soul, that he must needs 'curse God and die.'

His friend has written that Wiertz will have no disciples; his creed is too difficult; and this is, no doubt, true. Not more than once in many generations does the man come who, to the ardour of a most voluptuous and poetic fancy, can unite a strength of renunciation and a coldness, as of ice, amidst temptations such as brought Wiertz through the silent martyrdom of his existence. Yet all the same, since it is by the numbers and the devotion of his disciples that a man's greatness is best measured, and since it is, above all, by the school which, consciously or unconsciously, he

forms, that every great painter's influence can be judged, it must be confessed that Wiertz, who has left no school behind him, and on whom only the lustre of a partial celebrity has fallen after death, has failed in the supreme aspiration of his whole life.

The reasons are singular to trace, and are not immediately visible. Foremost of all is, of course, the unfitness of the century upon which he fell to receive him, and the ideas which governed him. In ancient Hellas, in republican Florence, in the Rome of Leo X., Wiertz would have been in sympathy with his contemporaries and in consonance with his era. His greatness would not have been relegated to one obscure spot on the low plains by the northern sea, but would have gone forth to all the ends of the earth, calling on men to follow him.

He had nothing in unison with the generation to which he belonged, and but small patience with it. Exalted on the heights of a superhuman purity of purpose and idealism of belief, he had no common bond of connection with the sheer materialism and venal practices of the modern world. Between him and his own age there was a great gulf fixed; he never cared, and his age never dared, to attempt to bridge it.

Seeking sedulously also, with all the reverence that this sincere genius commands, we may perceive yet another cause for his lack of hold upon the minds and memories of his own time. It is this: that, no doubt, as years grew on with him, earnest as was his search after perfection, a certain instinct towards the horrible prevailed over the instinct in him towards the beautiful in art. His own capability for creating what was sheerly terrible, exercised a fascination over him which, in

time, corrupted his sense of loveliness and harmony.

It was something with him in Art as it has been with Victor Hugo in Letters.

The facility for giving truth to the terrific and even the loathsome forms of composition, a certain passionate scorn, moreover, of the flowery falsehoods in which men love to drape the naked ugliness of unlovely truths, has transformed the genius of Hugo from a Titan to a Cyclops, and has made his career in literature one sheer descent from Olympus to Avernus. With the art of Wiertz it was something the same. True, his genius never suffered the absolute decadence to which Hugo's has sunk; to the very last Wiertz was strong, impressive, virile; but a certain exaggeration of the grotesque and the horrible, trenching upon bombast, and a growing tendency towards what was grotesque rather than impressive in terror, can be distinctly traced in the later creations.

In 'Un des Grands de la Terre,' for instance, there is no sense conveyed, except an overwhelming and ludicrous hideousness; it is Polyphemus attacked by Ulysses; or, seeking a subtler sense of parable in it, it is a rich man devoured, in retribution, by the results of his own excesses; but, read either way, in this immense canvas there is only what is ugly, what is ridiculous; the beauty and the power displayed in the 'Christ,' and the 'Patrocles' have altogether vanished. So with the series of pictures which is intended to symbolize the tortures of the human brain after decapitation. It is horrible, no doubt, but it is only horrible, without grandeur, without wonder; the spectator remains unmoved before it. And that this curious passion for

unloveliness grew upon him yearly, until it altogether obscured that aerial fancy, that true majesty, and that poetic feeling which produced the splendour of the Homeric conflict, and the smile of the 'Bouton de Rose,' none can have any doubt who enters the atelier of Wiertz.

Herein alone did he resemble his generation; the generation whose few men of genius, revolting at its sickly veil of social lies, fly to the opposite extreme in their rebellion, and bathe themselves naked in an abyss of obscene truth. Wiertz was never obscene; never even sensual; if he had been he would have been more popular; but he had so far the fatal weakness of his times, that he loved horror for its own sake, found pleasure in it, and took his sport in it; so that the noble tragedy in which his powers were first displayed became, with time, a turgid and merely painful exhibition of fruitless force, even as the eloquent imagery and the burning invective of Victor Hugo have degenerated into mere rant, mere bathos, mere bombast.

Herein lies, it would seem, the genuine cause of the failure of Wiertz to set his seal upon the world of which he was a master mind. Whilst penetrated with an almost morbid sense of the responsibility of the power of artistic creation, he yet neglected strangely that harmonious beauty which is the first principle of creative art. Thus he lost his hold upon his century.

It is only that which is intrinsically beautiful by proportion, by colouring, and by meaning which will impress its own likeness upon the world. All else, though it may momentarily awe, astonish, and impose, will inevitably fail to endure. His genius

had at times a fantastic terror in its choice and treatment of subjects which often amounted to absolute deformity.

There must also have been lacking in him something of that unerring perception of the ridiculous, and that finely attuned sense of humour, without which no human genius can be said to be complete. There are scenes on his canvases, painted by him in all seriousness as tragic and terrible, which inspire the gazer with no other inclination than to smile. A true sense of the ludicrous would have rendered such errors impossible to him, and would have supplied him with those subtler chords of human sympathy without which no man can seduce his generation to follow in his footsteps.

There was another and more practical reason likewise why his later years were, compared with his earlier, unproductive and disappointing. He became possessed with the idea of the new process of painting which he termed *peinture mâte*. It is impossible to enter into the full details of this invention, and in truth it is gone to the grave with him, since he has not left sufficient record of it for any one to attempt it after him; but judging by what he painted in it, it is only to be deeply regretted that such an illusion wasted so many valuable years. Belgian painters, with Baron Leys at their head, were appointed by the government to examine into the whole of the new process, and pronounced it *nil*. There is little value to be attached to the adverse verdict of rival artists; but to judge by the canvases painted by this master the *peinture mâte* was feeble, colourless, and coarse. It looks somewhat from a distance like very rude tapestry, near like a rough canvas roughly bedaubed with a

mixture of paste and oil colour. Certainly there is nothing to be lamented in its loss.

Wiertz considered that it would be of inestimable value to the world because it worked so rapidly. Surely there would have been no advantage in this facility. It is the fatal hurry of all modern artists which renders anything like careful and genuine work impossible from them.

What they lack is ideas; any means which would enable them to produce more rapidly than they do now—the commonplaces and conventionalities with which their canvas teems—would be a hindrance not a gain to mankind.

There would, besides, seem little or no room possible for any improvement in the present pigments and vehicles if oils and colours only were what they once were. In the days of the old masters young students ground the coloured earths, and the mingling of them with the needful oils was all a task tenderly and most carefully gone through while in the atelier and under the eye of the great teachers themselves. But in our days the colours are bought ready mixed, the oils are indifferent, the varnishes are adulterated, and the result is that it is doubtful whether any modern picture will have so long as fifty years' life. In a private collection at Antwerpen the beautiful *Faust* of Ary Scheffer is already covered with a million of small cracks, and before the century is out will, it is to be feared, be almost worthless.

Before the majority of modern productions we are tempted to feel thankful for anything which may efface them speedily; but amongst them are a few which we should with grief let die, and to this end surely the painters of the present day should earnestly seek some alteration in the colours which

they use. Amongst these few which we would fain cherish thus for ever are assuredly the '*Patrocles*' and the '*Christ*' of Wiertz. For, despite his too frequent alienation of beauty for horror, despite the grim and caustic irony which was too often substituted by him for the more legitimate harmonies and sympathies of art; despite the eccentric fancies which have walled up some of his finest nude studies, such as the '*Liseuse des Romains*,' in wooden stockades, which irritate the vision and the patience of the gazer; despite that dominion of the fantastically terrible which gained too strongly upon him, Wiertz is great—by all men of his own times unapproachably great—with much in him of the herculean force of Michael Angelo—with much in him of the lustrous colour of his own master, Rubens.

To say this is much; it is indeed the highest eulogy that can be passed; but it is not too much; for though he never reached by many lengths the heights on which these archangels of art stand aloft for ever, he yet certainly is the sole modern painter who has ever approached at all their grandeur in form and their heroism in thought.

These few unworthy pages will not have been written in vain if they lead any to whom these works are unknown to that silent studio, in its shroud of ivy, where all the soul of this mighty master still lives and speaks to all who have ears to hear.

There are an infinite solemnity and sadness in the wild-tangled garden, in the lofty leaf-clothed house, in the vast bare painting-room, in the brown and white dog that has outlived its master.

None should go to the temple of Rubens without going also to the temple of Wiertz.

The one is of marble and gold,

and wondrous carving and dream-like beauty in the great church of Antwerpen; the other is of bare plaster, and rude timber, and wild foliage and sorrowful solitude in a bye street in Brussels. Yet the two are not unworthy to be named in unison; although no two lives can be in wider contrast to each other. The one passed always in victory, in luxury, in goodly ease, in triumphal progress, in universal acclaim; the other passed always in conflict, in penury, in austere renunciation, in persecuted effort, in universal attacks and opprobrium. From first to last the existence of Rubens was a superb royalty; from first to last the existence of Wiertz was a relentless martyrdom.

From first to last—for with this man, who was denied all peace whilst he lived, death wrestled, cruelly torturing the body, until the mind was slowly and bitterly overcome and vanquished.

On the eighteenth of June, in the year 'sixty-five, he died in terrible torment of gangrene, which poisoned and burned up all the sources of life within him.

'*Je brûlé, je brûlé!*' he cried incessantly, even whilst the deadly cold of mortification stole upward through his limbs. In more conscious moments he lamented not for himself, but for the genius that perished with him. '*Ne pouvoir rien faire! Ne pouvoir plus créer!*'—it was the deadliest agony of the dying artist.

Great tears gathered slowly in his eyes and trembled there: with his last look he sought the face of his friend; the tenth hour of the night was tolled from the chimes of the city; a smile passed over his lips, and with it his last breath spent itself. Antoine Wiertz was dead.

They say that when he lay there, lifeless, the peace refused to him throughout his arduous years came on him at the last; and that when the summer sunrise streamed through the ivy shadows of his casement in the glory of the morning, his face was as the face of his Christ—his Christ, who brake asunder the bonds of the grave and rose triumphant in the power of God.

OUIDA.



THE ROMANCE OF A RING.*

IN THREE CHAPTERS.

BY MRS. ALGERNON KINGSFORD.

CHAPTER I.

GOLD.

TO begin this romance of mine I must retrace three weary decades of my autobiography, and call back to my memory the time of my early girlhood. I was sixteen years old when I lost my father and was left alone in the world, for I was an only child, and my mother had died before I completed my fourteenth year. But I was by no means a poor orphan. My father, during his last illness, having no relatives to whose care he chose to entrust me, confided me to the guardianship of his particular friend, an old white-headed baronet, who had been Pythias to his Damon at Oxford, and whom I had always held in especial reverence and affection. Sir Lorrimer Randall was the kindest, delightfulest specimen of that *rara avis in terris*, a good old English gentleman, that the sun has ever seen. His consort, too, a kissable, rosy-faced matron of some fifty seasons' standing, with white dimply hands of very diminutive size, and a quick mouse-like deportment, was the very ideal of a pretty old lady. I loved these dear ancient people with all my heart, and their two children, Vane and Alice, were always my special admiration. Very shortly after my settlement at Randall

Hall, Alice and I became bosom allies, and vowed an eternal fidelity and affection to one another, that neither lapse of years nor change of circumstance should be able to break. I have said that I was sixteen when I became an inmate of Sir Lorrimer's house. Alice was two years younger, but her brother, Vane, had attained the dignity of majority. He was of a very peculiar temperament, and his physique was appropriately singular. During my forty-six years of experience, I have never come across a duplicate of Vane Randall, nor have I ever encountered again so strange an expression of face and manner as his. He had an extraordinary reserve of character, remarkable in so young a man, and though I believe that his emotions were really stronger and more easily disturbed than most people's, and his sense of honour was particularly keen, yet he was very rarely betrayed into any outward demonstration of feeling, and had an exceptional fondness for solitude. In person he was tall beyond the ordinary standard, olive-complexioned, and brown-haired, and his eyes, the most remarkable and attractive it has ever been my fortune to see in or out of a picture. When I first went to live at Randall Hall, no longer as a casual guest for a few weeks' visit, but to take my place there as a regular

* The leading incidents of this story are true, but the writer is not at liberty to mention how she became acquainted with them.

member of the family circle, I was rather afraid of Vane. His reticence and grave demeanour discomfited me, his unyouthful patience and quietude annoyed me, and gave me a continual sense of being at a disadvantage when in his presence; while yet his evident power of mind, and his easy flow of language when he spoke upon any subject of depth or learning, moved my admiration and compelled my *homages*. Alice positively adored her brother, and believed in him implicitly. I think it was principally Alice's example upon this point, and the representations she so often made me of Vane's unerring sagacity and surpassing goodness, that first induced me to seek his friendship also; for I thought that one whom Alice held so infallible and loved so dearly must needs be somewhat beyond the common standard of mortals, and as eminently worthy of my adoration as of hers. My first advances towards the coveted alliance were made one summer's evening by the borders of an ornamental water upon the estate of my guardian. I had been gathering wild-flowers in the neighbouring copses, and meadows, to adorn withal the chamber of my dear Alice, who lay at home indisposed with headache, and with whom these children of the hedgerows were always greater favourites than the choicest exotics of hothouse or conservatory. Forcing my way through the brambles and underwood of the cover, parting the tangled branches with my hands, and threading a path in and out of the intricate labyrinth of hazel and birch, I came suddenly upon a little quiet piece of open, a sloping mound, green and soft with the verdure of delicate mosses and ferns, and espied Vane reclining, in an attitude suggestive of meditation, upon the bank of the lake that

bounded the charming spot. Vane leaned against a mound of tasselled grasses, with his hands clasped beneath his head, and an open book upon his knees, his deep, wonderful eyes fastened upon the tiny rippling waves that broke drowsily on the shore at his feet, and the whole expression of his face like that of a man lost in reverie. For a moment the excessive brightness of the spot, all bathed in the splendour of the summer sunset, dazzled and bewildered me after the subdued shadows of the wood. I paused, pushing aside the bracken, and shading my eyes with my hand, when the rustle of the branches caught his attention, and he turned his head and spoke to me.

'Why, Kate! So you've been wandering, have you? And you look tired, too. Come and rest yourself—this is an Eden worthy of your observation, I assure you; the loveliest bit of landscape for forty miles round!' I came forward, a little shyly, and sat down by his side in the full glow of the rosy light, but my heart fluttered uncomfortably, and I was still afraid to look him in the face. So, to avoid that necessity, and to divert his attention from myself, I took from his knees the book he had been reading, and found it to be Spenser's 'Faerie Queene.'

'Can you read this easily?' said I. 'I never can understand it, the old English is so difficult to make out.'

'Would you *like* to understand it, Kate?' he asked me, smiling a little. The question confused me—why, I don't know; I suppose I had not quite expected such a reply, or else the tone of his voice was embarrassing.

'Of course I should, Vane,' I stammered, conscious of a blush. He took the book from my hands, and sitting closer beside me, trans-

lated a part of the poem with so much fluency and grace, that I forgot my timidity of his presence, and lost my self-consciousness in newly-awakened admiration of the metrical treasures he unfolded to me. I was charmed—enraptured; and Vane, looking in my face as he closed the volume, no doubt perceived the emotion I had not sought to conceal, and said gravely:

‘I always sit here, Kate, every evening, with some one of my books. If you will come with me now and then, I think you would like to hear others of my favourite poets. Let me see—do you know German well?’

I confessed with burning cheeks that I was totally ignorant of it.

‘Well, then,’ said he, kindly, ‘I will teach it you. Is it a compact, Kate? Shall we read Schiller and Doctor Faustus together?’

Of course it was a compact, and so also from that day was the friendship between my tutor and me. And Alice, when she recovered from her indisposition, and found that I went every evening with her brother to learn German upon the banks of the mere, was very merry at my expense, and playfully assured me that she was rapidly becoming a prey to insupportable jealousy. Ah, I look back now upon that fond tranquil time of my life with bitterness in my soul, that bitterness of regret which is sorrow’s crown of sorrow—the remembrance of happier things. How swiftly the years went by! How devotedly I grew to love Vane Randall! How proud I was to believe—alas, poor mistaken child that I was—that I, and only I, possessed his unbounded confidence; that to me alone he was content to show his hopes, his aspirations, his hidden labours; that in my presence only he laid aside his reserve, and spoke

out of the very fulness and depth of his thoughts, hiding nothing from me, making me proprietor of every desire, and idea, and passion that occupied his mind! But there came at last a time when this pleasant delusion was to be done away, and I was to learn, oh, by what a bitter experience!—how far I had been from sharing the real secret of Vane’s heart and life. Five years of happiness that was almost uninterrupted, of peace that was almost untroubled, passed away from me at Randall Hall; and I awoke one sunshiny morning in the early spring to the consciousness that I that day attained the dignity of twenty-one, and that the auspicious event was to be duly signalized by a gayer and grander ball than had been celebrated in the old ‘country-house for half a century. There were to be a great many people present that evening, to honour me with their congratulations, whom I had never seen, some whose names I had scarcely heard twice in my life, others who were not known to me at all; but of one expected guest I had heard Alice often speak with awe, not unmingled with some touch of dislike, evinced by the disapprobation she openly expressed when her father made known his desire that Mr. Moreton’s name should be included in the list of the invited for my birthday night.

‘Mr. Moreton, papa?’ she had said, with a little *moue* of surprise, ‘what is he to do at a ball? Clergymen don’t dance. He’ll only stand in the doorways, and help to block up the entrances!’

But Sir Lorrimer had insisted upon the despatch of the invitation in question, and Mr. Moreton, to Alice’s profound astonishment, wrote an acceptance in reply. I was flushed with excitement and

expectancy when I entered the brilliantly-lighted drawing-rooms that night. And the knowledge of my own beauty, though it was none of the rarest, was unutterably delightful to me. I floated through the night in a sort of dreamy ecstatic gladness; I danced, as it seemed to me, upon clouds of lightness, my heart beat joyously with a sense of something akin to triumph. Vane never danced much, but he waltzed twice that evening with me, and I said to myself that if it had not been *with me* he would not have danced at all. There was infinite gratification in the thought, and the colour burned brighter in my cheeks as I rested my hand on his shoulder, and plunged for the second time under his piloting-into the sweet reckless delirium of my favourite *deux temps*. I saw Mr. Moreton several times during the evening, and I learned from Alice that her father had made arrangements for him to sleep at the Hall, as he was going in a few days to his rectory near London, and Sir Lorrimer and he were old friends, and had not met for some years.

'But, Ally,' I remonstrated, 'is he going to stay in this house till he starts for London? Won't that be rather a nuisance?' Alice pouted and shook her pretty head in self-exculpation. 'I know nothing about it,' she said; 'don't ask me! Oh, what a tiresome thing though, Katie?' Then she gave her hand to the gentleman who came to claim her for the next dance, and they went whirling away together down the long bright room.

But the Reverend Charles Moreton *did* stay at Lorrimer Hall for more than a week; and though I could not quite make up my mind to like him—it seemed somehow disloyal to Alice to admire any one she depreciated—I could not

but admit to my own conscience that his manner was gentle and pleasant; and though I daresay Alice would have indignantly repudiated the notion that he had any pretensions to beauty of person, he was at least agreeable to look at, and the tones of his voice were incontrovertibly soft and melodious. He was a much older man than Vane, probably by some fourteen or sixteen years, but I thought he assumed too much of the patron towards my *cher ami*, and I was proportionately indignant, and should no doubt have taken some method of openly expressing my ire on the subject, if Vane himself had only betrayed the least resentment towards the man, whom with some strange unaccountable feeling of presentiment, I could not help regarding in the light of an intruder and supplanter.

We saw a great deal of Mr. Moreton after the ball. He held two livings, one near London, and one in the midland counties, which had recently fallen into his possession; and on his journeys to and fro he frequently rested two or three days at Randall Hall.

He was with us once in the early autumn, just as the leaves began to change their summer brightness for more sober shades, and I remember that the season was an unusually hot and sultry one. This time he had stayed longer at the Hall than on any previous visit—almost a fortnight, and on the evening before the day fixed for his departure, Alice and he and I had spent a good half-hour beneath a big cedar-tree on the lawn, discussing church politics and parochial management. But Vane, finding himself unbearably bored, sauntered away with an excuse, and Alice herself was soon after summoned by the housekeeper to lend the light of

her countenance to some domestic arrangement indoors. It came to pass, therefore, that my guardian's guest and I were left alone, and I, possessing very few conversational powers, and being aware of my deficiency on that head, was fain to propose a tour through the garden alleys and the shrubbery. Suddenly, when we were in the very midst of the shrubbery, Mr. Moreton stood still and faced me.

'Miss Brandiscombe,' he said, with strange abruptness, 'you know that I am not a young man?'

I was taken horribly aback by this embarrassing piece of intelligence, pointed as it was with an interrogatory emphasis; but I did my best in the emergency of the moment to unite the principle of abstract truth with my own sense of personal politeness.

'I don't think you are very *old*,' I said, with an airy laugh. But he corrected that levity on the instant.

'Nor a poor man?' he added, in the same tone of inquiry. I lifted my eyes to his in alarmed silence, and mutely gave the affirmation he desired. 'I have known Sir Lorrimer Vane Randall almost all my life,' said he, taking both my hands into his, 'and there are few things connected with my circumstances and career which are unfamiliar to him. I believe he has an esteem and attachment for me. Certainly I regard him with feelings of the sincerest friendship.' There he paused, and seemed to be again expecting some pertinent observation, but, nothing at all appropriate suggested itself to me. So I coloured high, and still preserved a sagacious silence.

'Perhaps you guess already,' he continued, looking earnestly at me, 'my motives for reminding you of these things.

It is that you may not think I deal unfairly with you, or dishonourably towards the gentleman who has so long been your guardian and our mutual friend, by preferring the request I have resolved upon. Miss Brandiscombe—Kate—I am sure that I ask you to do nothing likely to displease Sir Lorrimer in entreating you to make me happy—to give me the title to protect and adore you—to be my wife.

He was actually in earnest! I dropped my eyes, and felt the crimson blood flaming hotly from my throat to my temples. In a moment a hundred swift-winged thoughts, reminiscences, and anticipations crowded into my mind, overwhelming and confusing the voice of my heart. Vanity, self-conceit, the desire of glorification—these were the baneful demons busiest with the shaping of my future at that terrible instant. I reflected that I was now past twenty-one, that, being very pretty, I ought no longer to remain boxed up in this country domicile of my ex-guardian's, surrounded only by gamekeepers and serving men, and exhibited occasionally only at a county dinner or a hunt ball. I knew that this man who now desired to marry me, after having passed forty years in the world unconquered by any woman, was looked upon as invulnerable, indomitable, and yet he had confessed himself my captive! What would be said of such a splendid conquest? Little Kate Brandiscombe leading the erudite, the *savant*, the cynical, the magnificent Charles Moreton in fetters! How the affair would astonish Sir Lorrimer! and please him, too, no doubt, as Mr. Moreton had said it would. Perhaps, already Sir Lorrimer knew of his friend's intention. And Alice—what would *she* say? Vane—

There a cold shiver seized me, my heart recoiled in my bosom, and I felt as though the soft August atmosphere had suddenly become an icy wind. I stood silent, unable to speak the words that would tear me asunder so irreparably from *him*, that would destroy so utterly a hope of whose existence in my soul I had been unconscious till that very moment. It is not until we stand on the point of losing for ever the possible fulfilment of our desire, that we comprehend how much the desire itself was part of our being.

Charles Moreton's musical voice broke in upon the thoughts that tore my heart so sorely.

'Dear Kate, is it to be "Yes" or "No?" Will you let me be your husband?"

Vane! Vane! The dear familiar name ran through my soul, like the death-cry of that terrible Hope dying in its birth. Ought I not to be ashamed of myself—ashamed of my weakness—ashamed of such unmaidenly, unsolicited, unrequited love? I had been taught that 'Women should be wooed, and not unsought be won;' and, I believed it to be decent and better for a girl to marry where she could feel little affection, than so to forget herself as to love where she could not marry. And so I accepted the escape that Providence seemed to be offering me; I crushed the natural morality born within me under the iron of the artificial morality I had learned in the world; I sacrificed the first-fruits of my heart to the idol of a false idea;—other women have done the same things since, often and over again. I gave the promise that Charles Moreton had asked of me, and I thought that in doing it I did well, since I could never be the wife of Vane Randall. *Never!*

But from the hour I pledged

myself and my honour thus, there seemed to come a change over the still quiet eventide, and all the shrubbery about us was astir with an awakened sobbing wind. Bough on bough swirled and sighed around, and here and there some light crispy leaf, withered by the touch of autumn, fell quivering from the rustling canopy overhead, and lay motionless and death-like upon the gravel at my feet. I passed out into another world, out into another life, with the man to whom I had promised all my future, the man who was my chosen husband, henceforth to be my sole guide and closest companion till the end.

Hardly had we quitted the shadow of the grove, when I perceived Alice hastening towards us. I could not meet her smiling happy face at that moment, and I felt that her merry laughter and light talk would break my heart. So I made a hasty excuse for deserting Mr. Moreton, and, promising a speedy return, I turned away from him and sped back into the shrubbery. But the next minute I heard Alice calling me, and fearing that I should be followed and captured either by her or by Charles Moreton himself, I ran breathlessly down a narrow cross-path leading to the banks of the mere, whither I did not think it likely any one would be at the trouble to pursue me. But the intricate maze of small winding byways and my own discomfiture of mind bewrayed my steps, and I plunged by mistake into the coppice below the lake where I had gathered the wild flowers for Alice on the day of my first *tête-à-tête* with her brother. I remembered the spot—I remembered the whole circumstances of that bygone evening, the brightness of the sunlight, the feelings of my heart, the beauty of the poem he made me

understand then for the first time! Mechanically I sought and found the opening in the low brushwood and bracken that led to the mere. But when I stepped out of the coppice on to the open rising ground, and fronted the full glory of the swooning westward sun, my heart leapt with a great leap into my throat, and the turf seemed unsteady beneath me, for there—as though that lost day of the Past were indeed restored—there, by that identical knoll of tufted grasses, his book lying open upon his knees, and his dear grave face turned towards the sunset, sat my darling, my friend Vane Randall! And when he saw me he rose and made me welcome, as he always did, laying his book aside, and as I drew near I looked down at it and saw that it was indeed the 'Faerie Queene.' 'Katie, dear, you are trembling—what is the matter?—what has happened?' Then I laid my arms about his neck, and buried my head upon them, and told him that I was engaged to be married to Charles Moreton, that he loved me and that I loved him, and that he was gone to tell my guardian about it now. And after I had told him I fell to crying like the child that I was, my face still resting upon his shoulder, hiding and nestling there where I had so often fled to seek sympathy and comfort before in far lighter cares than this. Ah me! how much lighter and more evanescent!

But after a little while, when I found that my friend let me sob on in silence, and said not a word to this great piece of news, I turned myself slowly in his embrace and looked at him, wondering why he did not speak. God pity me! even now I seem to see it all again as I saw it then—the white quivering lips, the eyes be-
numbed as in a dream, the dear

terrible face that looked no longer like the face of Vane, but like an image of it carven in marble! My sobs died suddenly, choked to silence by the new horror that seized me, and a fierce unwonted pain like the touch of fire caught my breath midway in my throat, and sapped up the tears that had been ready to fall from my eyes.

'Forgive me, Kate!' said he, at last. 'I wish you to be very happy, dear,—but—I had thought you loved *me* more than him, and I hoped to have made you my wife this year. But it's over now, Katie; and though I can't help telling you, don't let any one else know about it;—we've been playing a game of cross-questions together, dear, and I've got my crooked answer—that's all.'

Through the dreadful silence his words, sharp and distinct in their low measured utterance, fell upon my heart,—words that I have heard through more than twenty-five years since that autumn evening, reviving, like a constant haunting presence, a ghostly regret for the life they blighted,—the life *that might have been*; a weary unsatisfied yearning over the glory of youth and womanhood that perished at that bitter going down of the sun.

And as I looked up again I saw that the sun had gone down, and the gold of my life had gone with it. For me, henceforth, the gray had begun.

CHAPTER II.

GRAY.

That evening seemed to me to have no end. While I was dressing for dinner, Alice came into my room and sat down by the toilette table, as it was her custom to do; but I felt that it would be impossible to support any sort of con-

versation with her then, and I could not conceal my swollen eyelids and the disorder of my mind. But Alice did not seem at all surprised. She looked at me kindly, and drawing down my face to hers, told me, with a kiss, that she knew all about it, for Mr. Moreton had already told her and my guardian; that she hoped I should be very very happy, and that I mustn't cry. 'But, Katie,' she added, with one of her discontented little grimaces, 'do you know I'm not quite sure that I shan't cry. I had no idea it was Charles Moreton you liked! Shall I tell you what I thought and hoped?—and now you've spoilt it all!'

I could not speak, for at the moment that strange sensation which most people seem to experience at certain seasons pervaded my mind, and I felt with a curious certainty that I already knew the words she was going to say, and that I could not hinder her from saying them.

'Well; then,' said Alice after a little pause of hesitation, 'I thought it was Vane that you liked, and I said to myself and to papa that you two would marry in the end; and papa believed the same, I know; for when I first told him what I fancied about it he pinched my cheek and laughed, and said he didn't think me a very remarkable prophet, for *he* was clever enough to see as much as I did in that particular direction! And, of course, now that you are really engaged to somebody else, you won't mind my saying that I am a little disappointed—will you? Because I always promised myself that you were going to be my sister in good earnest some day.'

Again I could not answer her. I only had sown my own misery then, and I had to reap my harvest

of bitterness in silence. To think that after all that very Hope had been the hope of my guardian and of Alice, and of Vane himself, and that I—I had destroyed and ruined it in my fatal haste to be married! To think that happiness—*such* happiness would have come so easily to me if I had only waited for it perhaps a few days longer, and that everybody was ready to rejoice at my gladness! To think that the sweet fruit had been so near my lips, and that I, in my blindness and folly, had voluntarily thrust it away! And then to hear Alice's qualified felicitations on my terrible blunder, and to be told that she was disappointed in my choice! Disappointed! *SHE!*

How I wept that night! How I sobbed and moaned and sighed out the dull creeping hours from midnight until dawn! How I hated the returning light and my own life, and the pitiless, heartless sun that *would* rise again and make a new day!

But I never breathed a word of my distress to Alice; I never betrayed myself to Vane; I never resented a kiss nor a word of caress from Charles Moreton. My guardian plainly was a little surprised at the engagement, but he made no allusion to his son, nor hinted at the existence of the disappointment Alice had expressed so openly. Then came the eve of my wedding day, and with it, Vane, who had been in London for some weeks, returned to the Hall. It was very late when he arrived, and Alice had already bidden me good-night and was preparing to retire to bed. But when I heard Vane come into the house, I was seized with so strong a desire to see and speak to him, that instead of going directly to my bedroom, I ran down the stairs and encountered him in the dim-lighted hall.

At the sound of my footstep he looked up and greeted me with a smile.

'Ah, Katie!' said he, 'I'm glad you're there—I have something to show you. And you'll be in such general requisition in the morning that I shan't be able to get near you; so I'll take the chance that Providence gives me, and make the most of the present. Smithers, where is there a lamp burning?'

'In the dining-room, if you please, sir.'

I followed Vane into the great empty room, with its grim oaken wainscoting and faded ancestral portraits hanging on the walls.

Vane took a tiny velvet *étui* from his vest and opened it before me. It contained a gold ring of three separate circles, made in the semblance of a snake, and upon the crest of the head was set one large diamond of the first water, an amazing gem both for size and lustre.

'This is my present to you for to-morrow, Katie. You must wear it as a guard above your wedding ring. There is something written inside, you see, so that you mayn't forget me by-and-by.'

He held the jewel beneath the lamp as he spoke, and the light fell full upon the inside of the coils. I read this inscription graven there:

'Vane Randall gives this, with himself, to Kate Brandiscombe.'

I could not read it twice for the tears that blinded me. I could only hold the dear giver to my heart, and let him take my thanks in the passionate silence of a last embrace. Oh, if even then he could have known how I suffered for his sake! If even then he could have guessed how wildly I loved him! That night I was nearer to telling him the truth than I had ever been before, for I saw that his love was not abated

towards me, I knew that I was his darling still. Would it have been better for us, better for him, if I had spoken then, I wonder?

As I laid the jewel in its velvet case I looked again at the inscription within it, and noticed that it was not my married name that was engraven there, though the ring itself was a wedding gift.

'Why did you not,' said I, 'write Kate Moreton instead of the maiden name I shall forego to-morrow?'

'I have never known Kate Moreton,' he answered, in a low, sorrowful voice. "It is Kate Brandiscombe that I have loved, it is Kate Brandiscombe that I shall carry about in my heart all my life. And whenever she thinks of me I want her to be Kate Brandiscombe again, that my ring may be to her not only a "goodly ornament," but an "endlesse monument" of the past.'

He too, then, must have been thinking of the 'Epithalamion.'

* * * *

I was married to Charles Moreton upon the *twenty-fifth of October, eighteen hundred and forty-five*. And upon that day, after I had returned from the church with my new-made husband, Vane himself added his golden serpent to the single coil of the wedding ring already upon my finger. For I would wear no other guard than this gift of Vane's, and I would suffer no hand but his to put it on. And he, bending over me as I gazed at the shining circles, murmured:

'There are three coils, Katie—that is the magic number, you know, and the full elaboration and perfect complement of three is nine; three ones of threes, trinity in unity thrice demonstrated. Let the diamond on the serpent's crest stand for the adamant of our

friendship—the indissoluble bond between us—and the allegory is complete!

‘Ah, Vane,’ said I, ‘what result may not nine years bring to that precious friendship?’

No one was attending to us—we stood apart from the guests, and the chiffonier, groaning beneath the weight of my costly wedding gifts, was the centre of the general attraction. Vane glanced rapidly across the room, and then, fixing his wonderful scintillating eyes upon my face; ‘Katie,’ said he, with unwonted earnestness, ‘something impresses me to make you a very foolish request. Keep this ring untouched where I have put it. I shall like to think when we are parted that you have never moved it from your finger since this day, and that where I left it, there it remains.’

‘Vane,’ I answered, all my heart upon my lips, ‘it shall never be moved from my finger until you draw it off yourself.’ Then a sudden thought struck upon my mind, and I added hastily, ‘But, oh, Vane, suppose I lose the diamond—the symbol of our friendship? What shall I do then?’

And he answered me, ‘If you lose that, Katie, I will send you another gift to replace it.’

CHAPTER III.

SABLE.

Very shortly after the return of my husband and myself from the Continent, where we had spent our honeymoon, and just as I was beginning to settle down in my new home, I heard from Alice that Vane had entered the army.

‘After your marriage, Katie,’ wrote my naïve correspondent, ‘Vane seemed to grow quite different. He became more specula-

tive than ever, but instead of being tranquil and serene over his speculations, as he used to be, he turned excitable and restless. You may think how surprised we were to hear him say one day that he was tired of his quiet life, and must have some active profession, something that would stir up his energy, and take him into adventure and commotion, if possible—into danger. Papa laughed at him, and suggested that the season for fox-hunting had set in already; but I knew what Vane was hinting at, and what he meant to do. So I was not surprised when he told us very calmly last Saturday that the preliminaries were concluded, and that he had “got a mount for her Majesty’s pack.” I think it’s in the Lancers. Write to him, Katie; I know he would like to hear from you.’

I wrote as she suggested, and Vane would have come to see me, but I feared that if he did I might betray myself before my husband. So I sent Vane an excuse, and with the letter went also a *gage d’amitié* I had prepared for him, and which I was sure he would appreciate and value as dearly as I did his ring. My present was a double locket of plain dead gold, containing in the interior of one fold my own portrait, enamelled upon ivory, and bearing on the inner part of the fold, opposite the picture, this single line, traced in the tiniest of seed pearls:

‘For short time an endless monument.’

Time went on very calmly and placidly with me at the rectory, and Charles and I were as happy together as any one could reasonably have expected, considering the disparity of our ages: certainly we were much happier than I had believed it possible for such a marriage to make us. I did not

see so much of Alice as I had hoped to do, for Randall Hall was quite in the midst of England, but we often exchanged epistolary greetings, and our friendship remained as warm and unalterable as ever. Alice would not marry. Three years after my marriage, Lady Randall, whose feeble health had long before made her a non-entity in the household affairs, died, and my friend loved Sir Lorrimer too dearly to be able to leave him alone, now that Vane no longer resided in the old place. It was Alice's mission to be a good daughter, and she performed her duty with earnest devotion and willing love.

Time is a wonderfully skilful healer of mental disorders, and he was a good doctor to me. But I was sorry for my husband's sake that we had no child. More than eight years of my gray married life passed away, and no baby came to gladden the house and wake the mother's heart in my bosom; no tiny voice babbled in the great luxurious rooms where I sat day after day entertaining my visitors or presiding at my husband's table; no little pattering footsteps disturbed the aching silence of the heavy-carpeted staircase and the long marble corridors.

I taught myself to believe at last that the blessing women covet and prize so much was denied to me, and that in this crowning joy of happy wives and solace of sad ones, I should not be suffered to partake. But Providence meant more kindly, and decreed that though it was not for me to have a child upon earth, I should have one in heaven.

Early in the summer of 1854, a little son was born to me, but he was a weakly, tiny infant, and we all saw from the first that he could not live long. Three days

after his birth we gave him the names of Charles Vane, and when the quiet ceremony of baptism was over, my husband carried him to the couch where I lay, and put him gently into my arms. He opened his blue eyes, and looked at me wistfully, as though, poor baby, he dimly understood I was some one he might have learned to love if he could have lived a little while longer, then he dropped his wee tired head upon my breast with a little sigh, and died. I do not think I was very sorry, for I knew that I had a baby still, and that in some quiet corner of Paradise I should find, by-and-by, a tiny smiling face that I should know, and hear a childish voice that the angels would have taught to call me '*mother!*'

My husband's rectory was a very short distance from the Norwood Cemetery, in which my father had been buried; and at my request they laid the little coffin beside his grave, for I liked to think that they were so close together, and that when I was able to go out again, I might sit beside them both as they slept so quietly there and still, in their low green beds, whereon the grass waved, and the roses bloomed, and the sunshine and the rain of heaven came day after day to bless the peaceful rest of the dead.

That practice of burying one's friends in vaults is very horrible! It is so much better to think that those we have loved lie out beneath God's wide, open sky, under the clear-eyed shining stars and the warmth of the golden summer time, and the soft, beautiful snow that the angels spread so reverently over the long graves like a white pall to keep the frost and the cold of winter from those who lie below, than to know we have put away the bodies of our dead

upon shelves in a damp cupboard underground, with great iron doors and heavy bars shutting them in like the gates of a dungeon!

But it was very long before I was able to go to the cemetery. After little Charlie's death I lay a long time so ill that it was believed I should die, and I almost hoped so myself, for I had grown terribly weary of the world. But little by little my strength came back to me, and at length I used to walk up and down the garden-paths, leaning on my husband's arm, and watching the companies of swallows that congregated and wheeled and darted round the gabled roof of the rectory, already assembling for their southward journey. At last, one morning about a quarter before nine, I crept alone out of my husband's domains and found my way to the cemetery. I took with me the latest blooms our parterres had yielded, some golden pompones and lobelias, and a few hothouse rarities of fern. Kneeling by the two green mounds I had come to visit, I laid my flowers across my father's grave with unsteady fingers, and hung a wreath of maiden-hair and feathery exotics over the white stone cross that marked the resting-place of my baby-boy. But, not daring to remain too long upon a first expedition after so severe an illness as mine had been, and fearing to be overtaken by the rain—for the sky was gloomy with gathering clouds, and the wind blew sharply and keen from the north-east—I hastened home as quickly as my weakness permitted, and retired to my own boudoir. As I entered the room the tiny French clock upon the mantel-piece chimed for the quarter to ten. Raising my hand to draw aside the muslin curtain that shaded the window, my glance was suddenly attracted to some

unwonted appearance connected with my wedding finger. The next instant I perceived the nature of this peculiarity, and uttered a cry. I had lost my serpent ring! And straightway with the knowledge of that loss a flood of long-slumbering memories awakened within me, and the whole tide of my old passionate love poured back upon my heart. Only a few weeks ago I had heard from Alice that Vane was in the Crimea, and expecting soon to send us the account of some brilliant engagement in which—he had gaily written home—he should certainly distinguish himself and earn the most brilliant laurels imaginable. Where was he now? what had become of him? And the ring! the ring he gave me! the ring I had promised never to move from my hand!

Not heeding the shower, which now began to fall in good earnest, I snatched my bonnet and mantle from the table and fled back to the cemetery as fast as my faltering steps would carry me. I scattered the flowers upon the two graves, I tore asunder the wreath of maiden-hair, and suddenly, from a hanging spray of the delicate fern, shook out the gleaming jewel. It dropped upon the grave, and then rolled downwards to my feet. The matter was soon explained. My fingers were wasted and attenuated with long sickness, and the ring, being weighty, had slipped from my hand as I weaved the garland.

On returning to the rectory I met my maid. 'Please, ma'am, I didn't think you were out, because of the rain coming, but I couldn't find you indoors, so I went down the garden to look for you. The postman's just brought this.' I took the letter she offered me—a mere ordinary petition for a charity-school vote—but the date

of the postmark upon another envelope struck me like a sudden, staggering blow. 'Phoebe!' cried I, almost choked with the awful horror of the idea, 'is this October the twenty-fifth?' She looked back and answered me glibly in the affirmative. The anniversary of my wedding-day!

So on October the twenty-fifth, eighteen hundred and fifty-four, precisely nine years from the day on which Vane had put the serpent ring upon my finger, I had dropped it upon the grave of my dead child! What if, after all, my lost love *had* drawn his gift off my hand himself?

A short time after this curious loss and recovery of my ring I sat again one morning in my boudoir, very early after breakfast. A copy of the day's 'Times,' new and damp from the press, lay ready for my perusal upon a little inlaid console before the window, and I drew my arm-chair towards it and sat down with the opened paper in my hand. There, under the heading of Crimean Intelligence, I read the first account of that splendid act of military madness, that gallant deed of modern chivalry, which crowned the lustre of the victory at Balaclava, and wrote with the best of English blood the worthiest record of English daring—the charge of the Light Brigade. My heart burned as I read the story of that doomed Six Hundred who rode so bravely and devotedly to their fate in the very teeth of the Russian musketry, asking no reason for the wild command, seeking to find no excuse, only sweeping down straight upon the hostile ranks of glittering steel, with the courage of lions and the calm nobility of Englishmen who know that they are riding to their death.

Lives lost? What was this—this—here beneath my eyes, here

in my trembling hand—this well-known name looking so strange and awful in the midst of the common, black-printed columns? What was this terrible line that forced itself upon my sight, and burnt its way into my heart, as though every letter of it had been a stroke of fire? It was here, under the list of the killed and wounded.

'On the 25th October, in the charge of the Light Cavalry Brigade at Balaclava, Captain Vane Randall, 17th Lancers—shot through the heart.'

Ah! lovers and sisters and mothers, who have suddenly come upon such another dear familiar name in the obituaries of war, you and such as you only can understand the dull stupor of agony, the incredulous horror that sickened and smote me in that awful moment. I pressed my two palms to my temples with a vague consciousness of darkness and pain. Then a new thought flashed upon my mind, and I lowered my left hand and held it out before me. I could distinctly feel that Vane's ring was still upon it; but for some instinctive reason I cannot explain, I dared not look at it for a moment, but turned my head aside and began to glance round again slowly, as though I had expected to see some spectral thing, some dreadful apparition.

O strange and awful wonder that riveted my eyes at last! O terrible inexplicable accident, more ghastly and expressly significant than the first! *There was no longer a diamond upon the serpent's crest, and I looked only into the empty cavity wherein the stone had been set!*

My lost diamond was never found, though every possible search was instituted on its account. I reiterated my positive conviction that it must have been in the ring when I entered my

boudoir that morning; and that as I had not stirred from the room until after my discovery of the accident, the jewel must have dropped somewhere between the door and the window. But in vain; the maids were incredulous, and I did not care to trouble my husband with the relation of so singular a disappearance.

So I put away the object of this extraordinary history in my cabinet, neither daring nor desiring to wear it any longer; and it is needless to say that I regarded as sacrilege the idea of replacing the lost gem, believing that Vane himself would yet redeem his last promise, and complete the chain of these strange and unparalleled adventures.

He would send me another gift in the stead of my lost jewel. In this expectation I was not disappointed.

One afternoon, not many days after the announcement in England of the Balaclava victory, and the disappearance of the fateful diamond, Phoebe informed me that a gentleman waited to see me in my husband's study. She brought me his card, but the name upon it was unknown to me—'Colonel Somers, Scots Greys.' I found him a man of stately presence and peculiarly gentle voice, but of so haggard and melancholy an expression of face, that the very sight of him filled me with pity and sympathetic interest.

'Madam,' said he, rising and bowing low as I entered the room, 'such an utter stranger to you as I have the misfortune to be, ought certainly to excuse himself for the suddenness of an intrusion like this. But I am'—he hesitated a little, and his voice slightly dropped and faltered—'*I have been*,—a friend of Captain Randall; and being brought unexpectedly to England upon some very urgent

private affairs, impossible even in the present state of the war to neglect, I have come here to deliver to you with my own hands a packet, the contents of which, I am told, must certainly be more rightfully yours than anyone else's.'

He placed on the table, as he spoke, a small leathern jewel-case, worn and stained, which I did not recognise. My thanks rose to my lips, but the tears were ready behind them, and I could scarcely trust myself to speak. Colonel Somers took pity upon me, seeing me so distressed, and dropping his eyes from my face, he added, in his slow, musical tones:

'No doubt you know, Mrs. Moreton, the history of the disastrous Light Cavalry charge at Balaclava, a month ago. It was a dreadful business—the result, probably, of some misapprehension between Lord Raglan and Captain Nolan—who fell, poor fellow, doing his mistaken duty so admirably in the front of the Russian batteries. I did not myself take part in the charge, for I belong to the Heavy; but I saw the devoted brigade ride to its destruction, and I never shall forget the splendid sight. Cavalry ought on no account to act without support; infantry should always be close at hand to back them up; but *we* were the only reserve behind these men, guns and infantry being far in the rear. The brigade advanced in two lines, quickening their pace as they went—trot—canter—gallop—then a splendid burst! We heard them cheer as they flew into the smoke of the Russian batteries; we saw their lines thinned and broken—saw them join again—saw them rally. We could catch the flash of their sabres as they dashed among the guns, scattering the enemy's columns right and left, and striking down the gunners. I do not believe one man in the whole brigade

flinched from the desperate encounter. But gods could not have done what those brave fellows failed to do. They will settle these things at home, I suppose. I am a soldier, and I must pay my tribute where it is due. I never saw such magnificent riding, such undaunted courage in my life, before I saw this, and I have been many years in the Queen's service, so that I speak with some experience of battle-fields and military enthusiasm. Those Muscovite wretches should have revered the unparalleled valour of this Six Hundred; but they could neither understand nor appreciate it, and they opened their cursed volleys of grape and canister upon the returning remnants of the band, and shot the brave fellows down as though they had been dogs!

Colonel Somers paused a moment, and presently resumed, in altered and calmer tones:

'After the whole thing was over, some of our men found Captain Randall lying across his dead horse, among the foremost of those who had fallen, with his face turned towards the guns he had ridden out to capture. They brought him to me, because they knew he had been my friend. When I opened his vest, I saw that he had been shot in the heart, and the bullet that had brought him his death had passed on its way through a little gold pendant which I found tied about his neck with a silk thread. I hesitated at first to remove it, perceiving how much he must have valued it; but when I reflected that he was now no longer able to estimate that value, and that his father and sister would dearly prize the little treasure as a memorial of him whom they had lost, I altered my mind, and laid the trinket aside in a small leather

stud-box of my own, until I should have an opportunity of restoring it to my friend's family. Coming to England so soon after the battle, I brought it with me, and yesterday took it to Miss Randall, at Randall Hall, but she told me it could belong only to you; and I begged your address of her, that I might have the satisfaction of giving it myself into your hands.'

I was weeping now unstrainedly, for I could no longer conceal my emotion, and I knew from the tone of the voice that spoke to me that Vane's friend himself was scarcely less moved.

'Colonel Somers,' said I, 'you have done me a kindness that no words can repay; and if I fail to thank you sufficiently, it is because I feel so deeply the goodness and delicacy that prompted your visit. But I want to know one thing more: the hour at which that disastrous order of the twenty-fifth of October took place. Can you remember?'

'*The Light Cavalry Brigade,*' he answered, '*charged at ten minutes past eleven. By twenty-five minutes to noon, only the dead and dying were left in front of the Russian guns.*'

I had no need to ask further. Exactly at that time, allowing for the difference of longitude between London and the Crimea, the ring which Vane Randall had given me fell from my finger upon the grave of the child who was called after his name. But I longed to set my last doubt at rest, and I took the morocco *étui* in my hand.

'You will excuse me?' I said, pressing the spring, as I looked up at Colonel Somers.

He bowed his head in acquiescence.

Alas! alas! It was the gold locket I had given Vane nine years ago, all riddled and crushed by the bullet that had pierced his heart.

LUCY AND PUCK.

(See Mr. G. D. Leslie's picture.)

E'EN of the men who do contrive
 To take their tide at flood-time, I've
 Observed that but a fraction
 Are quite content with Fate's good things,
 And find the place they've sailed to brings
 Entire satisfaction.

But if the stream of life would land
 Me close to you where now you stand,
 Against those antique portals,
 With Puck—the lucky little elf—
 I'd joyfully confess myself
 The happiest of mortals !

Now, who will dare aver 'tis true,
 That charming little girls like you
 Are kindred to those frights ;
 Who thrust themselves in blatant wrath
 Before the world, and there shriek forth
 A tale about their 'rights.'

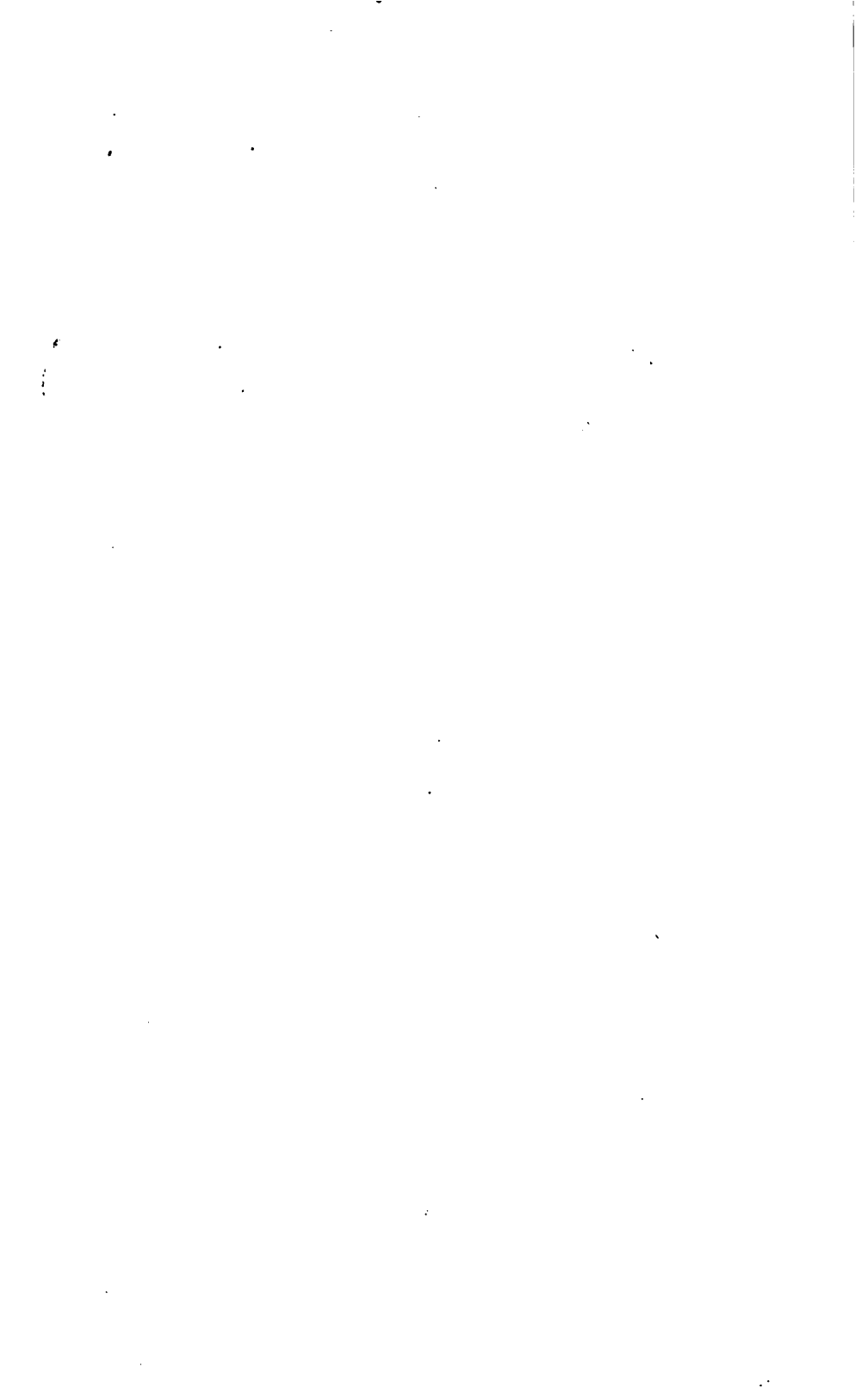
Who manage somehow to repress
 That loving, trusting tenderness—
 A woman's chiefest beauty :
 Who all that's gentle from them fling,—
 Are dying to do *everything*—
 That is, except their duty.

What are the rights that they don't get ?
 I never have discovered yet,
 And so I cannot say ;
 But if a girl, I think you'll find,
 To have a thing makes up her mind,
 There's sure to be a way.

They entertain, we've always heard,
 A love for that sweet final word—
 To take it would be treason :
 No one has e'er refused them this,
 Or to accept '*Because it is* !'
 For a sufficing reason.







But I should like to see one who,
If you set him a task to do,
 Would for a moment linger ;
Who 'neath that small thumb could resist,
Or whom you tried in vain to twist
 Around your little finger.

You're Queen of Hearts ! and, as you stand,
I'm positive that all the land
 No fairer sight produces.
There's no one who disputes your might,
Heart-strings, strung up however tight,
 Sweet Lucy's glance unlooses.

But Puck's so small, I think that he
Should not your sole protector be—
 That little dog's in luck—
Or wouldn't this arrangement do :
Small Puck shall still take care of you,
 And I'll take care of Puck ?
 ALFRED E. T. WATSON.



Lady Linden
at Home

Monday. July 1st

Music at 10.

LADY L. (at the top of the stairs). My dear Lydia, is not that our dear Pocock's head, struggling up the first flight?

Lydia. It is very difficult to recognize a head from such a point of view. But that is from want of practice, though I see no reason why we ought not to know our friends from the tops of their heads as well as from their side and front faces. How they *do* come rustling and crackling up—thick as—

Lady L. Do not say anything about the leaves of Vallambrosa, I implore you! Now to begin the greetings. How *de-do*? so glad you have come. Where is Mr. Greymayre? Not brought your second daughter?—How *de-do*? Ventured to bring your niece, my dear Lady Foretop? Of *course*. But I will ask you to go on into the next room; there are plenty of seats, and they will be very hard to be got presently. Ah, here is our dear Pocock at last on dry land.

Mr. Pocock. Yes! I have got to you, my dear lady—buffeted my way up. Did you see how I was fixed? Half way on the journey

two ladies' dresses or trains got wound round me like silk bandages. As each was pulling a different way, I was bound up more and more tightly, as if I had been wounded. I had literally to dive down and drag the compresses off, and restore to each her own. So we have music to-night—'a little music,' as they call it.

Lydia. Which you know, of course, means a great deal—long formal programme.

Lady L. What can one do? I could not give a ball. I am not able, at my time of life, to sit up until four in the morning, looking at my own species prancing about. We can all see a *ballet d'action* at the theatre.

Mr. P. Besides, balls are quite going out. It is really very odd that in our 'Court Journals' and 'Morning Posts,' there is such a meagre show of entries—sometimes not two a week. I remember twenty years ago (alas!), when I was—ahem!—a year or two younger than I am now—as I would come home from a dinner-party through the squares, seeing all the windows lit up and wide open, with figures

passing to and fro, while at every corner you would hear the melodious horn winding out the valse—and would not know where the sound was coming from. I have counted a score, as I returned, of a single evening—while the carriages would go clattering about half the night.

Lady L. I suspect the reason is the thing has become a drug. The new rich people—those peers' daughters who now marry Manchester merchants—we shall name no names, of course—can eclipse the indigent fashionables—who have grown disgusted with the competition.

Lydia. Marriages are great festivals now; and people seem to me to go there as to balls. I suppose they find that it reminds the young men of the great business of life more effectively than a foolish scene like this, which, when you come to think of it, is really opposed to all serious reflection.

Mr. P. It will by-and-by come to this, that the whole day will be devoted to 'going out.' Dress for the wedding, which will take up, say, from twelve till three. Dress for the flower show, four till five. Tea or drum, six till seven. Dinner-party, seven till ten. Evening ditto, eleven till midnight. Ball, midnight till three or four—à discretion. But about this music of yours. Explain—unfold. How is it that you have got a berth on board this galley?

Lady L. Of course you know I am not musical—and know nothing about it. I can play the piano; and, as you know, Thalberg was good enough to say that I was one of his most creditable pupils—and I used to sing pretty well; but half the young ladies now can say the same.

Mr. P. Indeed, the piano has lately become part of the gym-

nastics—only a little more difficult than croquet. It is amazing how cleverly the masters teach the unmusical girls. How it is overcrowded as a profession; it really makes the heart sink to read the long strings of musical mechanics in the 'Times,' who give their morning concerts, and announce that 'they have returned from the Continent;'—no one caring whether they stayed there all their lives.

Lady L. Except, probably, their butchers and bakers.

Mr. P. And where are the pupils for this musical rabble? Half of them must be starving. And as for the morning concerts—I was persuaded to take a ticket for one at Lady Fantail's, at Grosvenor Gate, who had kindly, you know, given her house—

Lady L. Sickening. There are actually plenty of people ready to pay double the money to be allowed to enter the illustrious mansion, and look from afar off at the illustrious hostess, who hardly thinks it worth her while to attend. They really have a dreamy notion that it might by some happy chance lead to an acquaintance. 'Stranger things have happened,' the parasite says to her husband. With this view they send a handsome subscription to her, and not to the poor musical navvy, Mr. Grisi Smith.

Lydia. What a name! when did you invent that?

Mr. P. Evolved it out of my own consciousness. I have really known instances of the kind. The hostess, of course, only hands on the ingeniously-phrased document, with the enclosure, to Grisi Smith. At the worst they can correct their friends about Lady Fantail's appearance, colour of her hair, &c.; make out the names of the company. Then there is the house itself, for whose walls they feel a reverence. Like the shell—

'Still they remember the august abodes,
And murmurs as the Ocean murmurs
thee.'

The whole thing is overdone, and the music master's morning concert thus becomes a nuisance. I know myself the way in which Grisi Smith was manufactured. He was the son of a tenant on Lord Fantail's estate, and used to sing a ballad, with a fair voice, at the Harvest Homes; sometimes was had up at the Castle when there was company. They got him lessons from some one at the cathedral. He was sent over to France for a year, and came back Grisi Smith. That qualified him to go to London and give lessons. Lady Fantail teases every one to employ him; she won't have him for her own daughters, but thinks him good enough for any one else's. As a matter of course we have Mr. Grisi Smith's annual morning concert, which will be given at Grosvenor Gate, by the kind permission, &c. By some ingenious arrangement, or violation of the English language, these nuisances come twice a year. I know I have been asked twice a year. But tell me about your enterprise. How did you collect all this musical talent?

Lady L. Oh! I had nothing to do with it. Put it all into the hands of Timpano, you know, who teaches the Princesses, and is really a nice, good creature. He engaged to supply the music, just as Gunter did the refreshments. There is the programme for you.

Mr. P. The bill of fare, also like Gunter's. Let us see.

'GROSVENOR SQUARE.

'*July 1st.*

'PARTE PRIMA.'

Lady L. 'Part the first' would not do, of course, as we are all English.

Mr. P. Yes; as well say, 'Bill of fare,' instead of 'Menu du jour.' Well, 'Parte prima.'

'*Duetto, "La Donzella"*—Timpano—Mdlle. TOLLA and Mdlle. CARLOTTA TOLLA.'

Ah! I see. The sisters Tolla pursuing each other in thirds all the way through.

Lady L. Yes. One of the sweet things that Timpano teaches his young ladies.

Mr. P. '*Solo, "Largo al Fac-totum,"* SIGNOR BUFFONE.'

A round, barrel-shaped little man, I am sure, who will be excruciatingly droll in an unknown tongue.

Lady L. And have all the fun to himself. I have not even seen him, so I cannot tell. But we may not anticipate. What comes next?

Mr. P. A *Grand Duo*, Violino e Piano, on motifs from the songs of Signor Timpano—*Timpano*—Herr SCHAUB and Fraulein SCHAUB.

Lady L. The new German violinist. I am told he is wonderful.

Mr. P. Scampering over his strings, I suppose, like a cat over the tiles. What next?

'*Romance, "Ma Fille"*—*Timpano*—M. BEAUNE.' Timpano here, Timpano there. Why, it seems to be all Timpano.

Lady L. But don't you know that he is the man of the hour. Every one sings his songs. It is considered a great compliment his coming to me, I assure you. But I must tell you about poor Beaune. You will see him. A most charming, elegant creature—a gentleman by birth—but driven from his native land.

Mr. P. (smiling). I know—by the unsettled state of things—suspected by Thiers, and all that. The Prussians pillaged his house. Strange to say it is always a musician that these barbarians have

selected as victims. I have met a dozen, at least: some who have lost their estates: still the Prussians could not have taken *these* away like the clocks.

Lady L. Don't be so bitter. See what a handsome man he is.

Mr. P. Exactly like the languishing fellows on the front page of the ballads. He seems to be sitting alone and forlorn. He hopes the young ladies will notice him, and see that he has nought to do with the rest of the surging *canaille* behind him. I notice at this kind of concert how much the singers and players enjoy themselves in this enclosure—how they laugh and applaud each other.

Lady L. See, here is Colonel Antrobus struggling up.

Mr. P. He hasn't brought his whip with him, I see.

Lady L. Delighted to see you, Colonel Antrobus, off your box. I drove round by the Magazine to see all your four-in-hands start. It was really a pretty sight. There were one or two amateurs who didn't know how to drive, or looked as if they didn't.

Col. A. The procession was certainly effective. But the ladies did not muster strong enough. Fetlock said, neatly enough, that his drag is meant to be a sort of bouquet-holder, with the flowers—roses, lilies of the valley, and the rest—arranged on the top.

Lydia. A bouquet drawn by four horses! Somehow that does not seem appropriate. Was that Lady Fetlock seated beside him on the box seat?

Col. A. Yes. As we are on the subject of neat things, a motto might be suggested for the club of 'Light only on the box.' However, I am glad to see that this new fashion has come in without any of the old horsey slang. I have not heard a word about

'tooling' a fine turn-out down to Richmond, or a matchless 'team of tits.' This makes me think that it won't last, and that the old sporting spirit is not present. One or two seemed nervous, and drove their thoroughbreds with an excess of caution.

Mr. P. Hark to the twang of fiddles. I think we ought to go in now and hear some music. I declare there is the little round man singing something funny. Just listen to him. How he works his eyes and arms, and shakes his head slyly. We have just come in for the 'patter' portion.

Lady L. What do you mean by that?

Mr. P. Why; just at the end of these irresistibly droll songs the singer always bursts into this torrent of syllables, as if he had just turned Tattenham Corner, and wanted to ride in first. He is evidently got some side-splitting joke all to himself, as you may see from the grave faces of the young ladies near him. But only listen now—listen to the clatter of voices. It's like the roaring of the sea. And yet I could swear there is some one singing in the next room.

Lady L. Of course there is. My concert is going on all this time. Just look round. What flirtation, noisy laughter, laying of heads together. Look at the confidential party who have drawn together in the corner. They find a piquancy in hearing the music going on in the next room, while they talk on covered by that noise, as they consider it. You don't see the same animation at an ordinary drum. I suppose they find a satisfaction, like the boys at school, in doing what is disagreeable.

Mr. P. It is more, I think, that wish to show themselves superior to regulations of any kind, which we often see in some of your fine

ladies. There is an air of *prestige* about such proceedings, as it shows rules, &c., were not made for them, and that they are above them.

Lydia. Then we ought to show an example. I hear some plaintive and tender accents. I am sure it is your expatriated tenor and his dying daughter.

Mr. P. Daughter dying, and he come out! Oh, I see. The song, 'Ma Fille Mourante.' Yes, there he is. Observe the mournfulness of his face; one would think he really had a sick daughter at home.

Lady L. He might have a dozen for all these people—Sh—ah! Do, please, Miss Mettleton—you must really listen to M. Beaune.

Mr. P. What is it all about?

Lydia. Don't you hear it. It is an actor who has to play some comic part, and is convulsing the house while his daughter lies dying at home. See how the accompaniment is hurrying on. He is describing the crowded theatre—the enjoyment in the stalls. She is laughing now. But—pause—

Mr. P. I see. We are getting to the Refrain. There he goes—'Ma Fil-le Mourante'—'Ma Fille Mourante'—Rum ti tum. A pretty air, and I really think he is crying. Wonderful creatures the French for that. They are like those syphon-bottles; you can 'tap' the tears, like the soda-water, at any moment. Bravo!

Lady L. I am afraid you are ill, or getting ill.

Mr. P. I know what you mean, because I am so ill-natured. But all this is between you and me. It really means nothing. Oh, I see yonder the black-glazed calico head-dress. You have got the Ashango minister to come.

Lady L. A most agreeable man. Doesn't he look like a Frenchman, with his twinkling eyes, black

moustaches, and round figure. He talks delightfully, though I do wish he would not wear that head-dress. I must own that I am getting rather tired of these foreign ministers. They go everywhere, and are glad to go anywhere. I own I love that little grey, grizzly one, who talks in different French, and has such a fine decoration. He is charming, and is so modest and retiring.

Mr. P. We shall have kings by-and-by. We shall be grinding them against the drawing-room doors, with a rough 'Beg your pardon.'

Lady L. By-the-way, I see there are no travelling kings putting up at the hotels now. Claridge's ought to call itself 'The Belgian Arms,' or 'The Crown,' or take some good old loyal sign.

Mr. P. I know you are going to give the usual cut at the Queen—Buckingham Palace shut—shame to send our royal guests to an hotel. I declare I can't join in these cries. I think it is the beginning of putting things on a sensible footing.

Lydia. And how sensible?

Lady L. And on what footing?

Mr. P. Why, judge it by your own case. You get away from this round of dinners and parties for a little quiet; travel off to a distant capital to relax, unbend, or whatever it is called, your mind. Would you relish being seized on, as you arrive, by some kind and obstreperous friends, who will drag you off from the hotel, and seize the opportunity of giving, in your honour, a round of parties and entertainments. It must be an inexpressible relief for these tourist monarchs to find themselves among a sensible people, who will let them do as they like. It must be a luxury, too, for them to go to an hotel. Believe me, this rough and

ready hospitality to persons 'only passing through' is a bore and an oppression.

Lady L. Now there is my violin man beginning. He is celebrated for his tone—and expression.

Mr. P. I can't hear him from this place. But I can just catch the horny, groaning sound which these men of feeling put into their

instruments. There goes his bow skipping up the gamut, like a little school girl down a corridor. He looks vindictive at it. Now for the variations—see how he claws and gripes it—plucks its entrails out.

Lady L. I won't listen to you any more. Go over and take some lady down to refreshment.



OUR PHILOSOPHERS.

II.

DENMARK HILL, as those who interest themselves in the *habitats* of our authors are aware, might claim to be the literary suburb of London in the present century, as Twickenham was in the last. It is not a new suburb, with hastily run up houses and extemporized gardens; but one of old fashion and repute, substantial, well timbered, situated well both in respect to the great metropolis and the sweet repose of the Surrey hills. Those who constantly pass it on the High Level line will certainly think that it has the prettiest of suburban railway stations. Not very far from the railway station, taking the road on the left, and whether more properly belonging to Denmark Hill or Herne Hill left somewhat undecided, is a house which I love to contemplate, and which in future times will often perhaps attract pilgrims' feet. This is the house which Mr. Ruskin inhabited for so many years, and from which he has dated so many and perhaps the best of his writings. We are sorry to find that he has now quitted it in something very much like disgust. The metropolitan gin palaces and their spurious architecture have been too much for his 'finer feelings,' harrowed by the reflection that perhaps the 'Seven Lamps of Architecture' have had something to do with the matter. 'I have had indirect influence,' writes Mr. Ruskin, 'on nearly every cheap villa-builder between this and Bromley; and there is scarcely a public-house near the Crystal Palace but sells its gin-and-bitters under pseudo-Venetian capitals, copied from the

Church of the Madonna of Health or of Miracles. And one of my principal motives for leaving my present house is, that it is surrounded everywhere by these accursed Frankenstein monsters of indirectly my own making.' He complains, too, in one of his books, how the fresh air of the Norwood Hills is becoming poisoned with smoke. And so Mr. Ruskin has quitted Denmark Hill for Coniston. We confess we are sorry for it. We know indeed the tender shadows of those mountains, and the lovely scenery of the upper reaches of those waters. But Mr. Ruskin is not even as one of the lake poets. His mission is not alone to interpret Nature, but to interpret Art, and therefore to mingle in the keen play of intellect, the full fray of criticism and discussion. And a home such as this, within the city and yet not of it, close to all the haunts of art and education, and yet open to the sun and breeze, appears to me fitter for his peculiar genius than the solitudes of Coniston. As you go along the dusty high road there are trim villas, or rather fine houses, on the right hand and on the left. There is little indeed to notice beyond the unusual extent of the demesne. But, as soon as you have passed the lodge and gone up the path, you discern a noble cedar, kindred to that in 'Maud,' 'sighing for Lebanon.' When you are in the rear of the house you are at once in the open country. The air is brilliant, the prospect noble. I look on these groves and walks as those of the gardens of the hero Academus. A secluded walk

runs all round a stretch of meadow grass. And there are combinations of fruit, and foliage, and flowers, and lawn such as you rarely see. I only hope Mr. Ruskin will be better pleased with his new home than his last, but it will be long ere the associations of Denmark Hill are shifted to Coniston.

In that clever little book, 'Ethics of the Dust,' Mr. Ruskin is actually lecturing a class of school-girls, which we know by experience to be an extremely pleasant employment. On a few of the simplest facts respecting crystallization he establishes all kinds of sapiencies and moralities. Our clever girl, Dora, of sweet seventeen, is made to say, 'Well, it may be all very fine and philosophical; but shouldn't I just like to read you the end of the second volume of "Modern Painters"?' To which the lecturer ('of incalculable age') replies, 'My dear, do you think any teacher could be worth your listening to, or anybody else's listening to, who had learned nothing and altered his mind in nothing, from seven-and-twenty to seven-and-forty? But the second volume is very good for you as far as it goes.' To how many of us has 'Modern Painters' been an education, been in itself a noble system of philosophy. What a curious theory is that German notion that a disease of the eyes made Turner paint with his peculiar colouring, and so produced Ruskin's great work that made the world praise Turner. Mr. Ruskin may be turning crotchety and eccentric, but he may do whatever he likes, and the English language and the English people will still owe him an intense, an incalculable amount of gratitude. All we know of a brave, unselfish, generous life, is in harmony with his writings. It is a

divine philosophy that bears the fruits of good living. Perhaps his own words suit himself: 'If, on looking back, your whole life should seem rugged as a palm-tree stem; still, never mind, so long as it has been growing, and has its grand green shade of leaves, and weight of honied fruit at top.' And once again: 'It seems to me, on the whole, that the feelings of the purest and most mightily-passioned human souls are likely to be truest. Not, indeed, if they do not desire to know the truth, or blind themselves to it that they may please themselves with passion; for then they are no longer pure; but if continually seeking and accepting the truth, as far as it is discernible, they trust their Maker for the integrity of the instincts He has gifted them with, and rest in the sense of a higher truth which they cannot demonstrate, I think they will be most in the right, so.'

And yet he is so odd. He will not go to the Hartz, 'for I want to retain the romantic feeling about the name, and I have done myself some harm already by seeing the monotonous and heavy form of the Brocken.' So odd about his books; I believe you can only get them now from somebody in a little village in Kent. But it would take pages to discuss the oddities of Mr. Ruskin. We might also talk about his schemes for good, his endowments, subsidies, benevolences, and so on. But we fall back on his stately prose-poetry, the memory of which will always haunt the student with the sense of the sweetness, sweet almost to pain, of the summer sunset, and then again reminding us in its energetic march of a coronation anthem.

In every great poet there is a strong element of the philosopher. This is found in Shelley, and still

more in Wordsworth, who has been said to reproduce the philosophy of Spinoza. Byron was nothing of a philosopher, but in intellectual power he was below Shelley; in moral power he was below Wordsworth. Coleridge was a great poet, but he was in a still higher degree a great philosopher. The philosophical aspect of the Brownings is the matter that we shall elsewhere hope to discuss. Now let us look for a few moments at Mr. Tennyson. The great question that underlies all our science and all our thinking is concerned with the reality of the soul's eternal life and its destinies; whether we are homeless, wandering men, specks thrown up for a moment on the surface of the boundless billows of existence, or whether we are procuring a settled, ordered course over the apparently illimitable sea, to some destined haven. Men eagerly listen for the last scientific proofs, or the latest metaphysical argument on these absorbing topics, although they may seem to conduct us to materialism or nihilism, and beat down the unconquerable instinct of immortality on which the soul reposes as if on a rock. How nobly and how philosophically does Tennyson sketch the conflict.

"So careful of the type." But, no.
From scarp'd cliff, and quarried stone
She cries, "A thousand types are gone:
I care for nothing, all shall go.

"Thou makest thine appeal to me:
I bring to life, I bring to death:"
The spirit does but mean the breath:
I know no more." And he shall be.

"Man, her lost work, who seemed so fair,
Such splendid purpose in his eyes,
Who rolled the psalms to wintry skies,
Who built him fanes of fruitless prayer.

"Who trusted God was love indeed,
And love Creation's fixed law—
Though Nature, red in tooth and claw
With ravine, shrieked against his creed—

"Who lived, who suffered countless ills,
Who battled for the True, the Just,
Be blown about the desert dust,
Or sealed within the iron hills!

"No more? A monster then, a dream,
A discord. Dragons in the prime
That tore each other in the slime
Were mellow music marched with him.

"O life as futile, then, as frail!
O for thy voice to soothe and bless!
What hope of answer or redress?
Behind the veil, behind the veil."

The philosophical vein is chiefly shown in the earlier volumes in that wonderful poem, the 'Palace of Arts.' There was a tribe of commentators who publish essays about Mr. Tennyson's poem, and to them we would especially commend this one. The general drift of the poem is that art, science, knowledge, are nothing without religion. Mr. Tennyson advances beyond this poem in that wonderful composition, 'The Two Voices.' The problem is something like that thrown in 'Maud,'

"Do we move ourselves, or are we moved
by an unseen hand at a game?"

Then, I suppose, most readers of Tennyson have tried to construct a theory of the exact meaning of the 'Vision of Sin,' and to explain the line:

"God made himself an awful rose of dawn."

After all, 'In Memoriam' stands forth as Tennyson's noblest philosophical utterance; but, perhaps, there are occasional pieces and passages in his later writings, where we have his ultimate and most developed views. For instance, there is the little poem called 'Wages,' in which we are told that virtue does not desire any wages at all in the ordinary sense in which men speak of wages.

'She desires no isles of the blest, no quiet
seats of the just
To rest in a golden grove or bask in a
summer sky,
Give her the wages of going on and
not to die.'

The passage is remarkable as in opposition to a certain quietism, very characteristic of Mr. Tennyson. We do not like the shrinking from death; we believe that virtue instinctively desires the blessed isles, and the 'quiet seats of the just,' but still the healthy moral tone of action and hard work is a good instinct of the Tennysonian ethics. In the poem of the 'Holy Grail,' for among the best poems in the volume that bears the name, Arthur, *flos regum*, touches on the deepest problems of philosophy.

'Let visions of the night, or of the day,
Come, as they will; and many a time
they come,
Until this earth he walks on seems not
earth,
This light that strikes his eyeball is
not light,
This air that strikes his forehead is not
air,
But vision—yes, his very hand and
foot
In moments when he feels he cannot
die,
And knows himself no vision to him-
self,
Nor the high God a vision, nor that
one
Who rose again.'

We have seen this passage thus ably paraphrased by a competent critic:

'Our only knowledge of material reality comes from our duties and our needs; we are obliged to act toward things as if they were real; but the moment action ceases and thought begins, then reality begins to evaporate; all turns to dreams; we are certain of nothing but the *cogito ergo sum*, the existence of self as a thinking being; and on this certainty we build up further certainties—first, our immortality, next the being

of God; lastly, the truth of Christianity.' The commentary seems a very fair one, and such a commentary is often wanted. When one of the periodicals published 'Lucretius,' it was found necessary in the next number to give an essay to explain it. Mr. Tennyson's views, both on the ethical side and on the dogmatic side, appear to be 'correct' enough, and even orthodox, and, therefore, the little philosophical poem, not of a very intelligible kind, called 'the Higher Pantheism,' need not cause any alarm. His system appears to be founded on doubt, and sometimes readily lends itself to scepticism. And the poem of the 'Higher Pantheism,' when disintegrated and analysed—a process with which we will not trouble our readers—is, in point of fact, no Pantheism at all, whether of a 'Higher' or lower type.

But of all our English writers there is none whose influence has been wider and more remarkable than Mr. Carlyle's. There is not now among the youth of England the same *furor* for Carlyle that there once was when the said youth talked Carlylese, and went about the world bragging of being 'earnest.' We recollect a sort of young man who bragged about 'earnestness' in a most insincere way, and protested against 'cant' with the greatest cant imaginable. Yet a feeling of sympathy and affection has long been growing up for the old philosopher of Chelsea, even among those who were most averse to his philosophy; and it is increasingly felt that he is a real, increasing, and a beneficial influence in the country. Whenever from Cheyne Walk he breaks silence, and discusses any topic of the day, men of all classes pause to listen to him. Yet when we endeavour accurately to guess the nature of his achievement, we own to the

sense of a certain amount of failure and disappointment. The most serious rôle that Mr. Carlyle has played is that of the historian, and here he has declined in a retrogressive order. The History of the French Revolution is a series of lurid pictures which almost awfully affect the imagination, and are thoroughly realistic. The apology for Cromwell is by no means of equal value, and is an apology even for the bloodthirsty atrocities of Dundalk. But perhaps the Life of Frederick the Great is the main failure. Mr. Carlyle sought for, and hoped he had obtained, a hero. He must by this time suspect that his hero is a very pretty rascal. He has never fairly grappled with the burglarious seizure of Silesia which was the *causa causans* of the Seven Years' War. After all we suspect that Mr. Carlyle must fall back on his earlier works as his most permanent source of renown. To how many of us did the first reading of the 'Miscellanies' open up the first view into the German world of thought? Nothing has ever surpassed such papers as those on Novalis and Jean Paul Richter, and where are there more genuine bits of criticism than the papers on Boswell and Burns. Carlyle had much deeper insight than Macaulay into the true characters and lives of Boswell and Johnson, and the sheer cleverness of Macaulay is left quite behind. But it is not so much as a teacher as a moralist that the influence of Carlyle has been most felt. Be true, be simple, be honest, be intelligible, is his evangel; all copybook sentences, truly, but to use his own phraseology, evermore to be rehearsed before the immensities and the eternities, ever in the new dialect of new times to be rewritten, redescribed, rejoice in his disciples.

We should not shrink from giving Mr. Carlyle formal entrance into the ranks of the philosophers. If he had to classify himself—which he would probably rather not do—he would be a transcendentalist opposed to the empiricism or experimentalism of the school of Mr. Mill; and, as we have pointed out, our belief is that Mr. Tennyson would not be far from him. This is the explanation of Mr. Carlyle's eternities, eternal veracities, eternal justice, and the like. Indeed, those who have never read of the Hamiltonian philosophy have had the conviction and the doctrine of necessary truths brought home to them by the intense earnestness of Mr. Carlyle. To take just one citation from him: 'To speak a little pedantically, there is a science of dynamics in man's fortunes and nature as well as of mechanics. There is a science which treats of and particularly addresses the primary, unmodified forces and energies of man, the mysterious springs of love, and fear, and wonder, of enthusiasm, poetry, and religion, all which have a truly vital and *infinite* character, as well as a science which particularly addresses the *finite* modified developments of them, when they take the shape of immediate "mobiles" as holes of reward or as fear of punishment. Now it is certain that in former times the wise men, the enlightened lambs of their kind, who appeared generally as moralists, poets, and priests, did, without neglecting the mechanical province, deal chiefly with the dynamical.' This is genuine Carlylism. Mr. Carlyle must rejoice in his disciples.

'The words of Pyrrhus to his Epirotes, "Ye are my wings," express,' says Niebühr, 'the feeling of a zealous teacher towards

hearers whom he loves, and whose whole souls take part in his discourse.' The conviction that he has been an immense force—perhaps the greatest living force we have—in stimulating and elevating the minds of men who make the common mind of the country, must be very sweet to him. Mr. Carlyle is a great leader and teacher of men. How grand is that teaching which he first taught himself before teaching it to others: 'Do the duty which lies nearest thee, which thou knowest to be a duty Yes, here, in this poor, miserable, hampered, despicable Actual, wherein thou even now standest, here or nowhere is thy Ideal; work it out therefrom; and working, believe, live, be free.' The personality of Carlyle is never doubtful in his writings; he himself is Teufelsdröckti; he himself Smelfungus. He is not a metaphysician; indeed, he quaintly compares the metaphysician to the 'Irish saint who swam across the channel carrying his head in his teeth,' and he gravely adds that the feat has never been repeated. But he is a downright philosopher—utterly wrong in the theory of hero-worship which is the centre of his system—but with infinite meanings lurking in his cloudy style, and with strong sense and genius, if not much love, if not much patience, in his views of his fellow-countrymen, 'seventeen millions—mostly fools.'

We have spoken of great thinkers, Ruskin, Tennyson, Carlyle, but there are other thinkers, whom we don't regard as great, but of whom we must take account. The story goes that the philosopher Kepler having delayed coming down to his supper, his wife, who was something of a shrew, took him to task for keeping her waiting. He excused himself by telling her he had got so absorbed in

thinking of the theory of 'the fortuitous concourse of atoms,' that he had forgotten the salad she had prepared. Katherine naturally asked for an explanation of this odd theory. He replied, 'Suppose that from all eternity there had been flying about atoms of vinegar, and atoms of oil, and atoms of lettuce, you perceive that in time we might have had a salad.' 'Ay, ay,' said his wife, 'all that might be, but you wouldn't get one so nicely dressed as this.' Madame Kepler's argument might hold very good for those who, like Alphonso, might have created a much better world if their judgment had been consulted. The argument, for instance, that the human eye is not the result or intelligence, the whole of the opposition to the argument for design might be very relevant to this anecdote. The false lights of philosophy seem willing enough to work out speculation into action, and show us that some curious aberrations of conduct are connected with their errors in ethics and reasoning. One would-be philosopher has written an essay which he calls 'Euthanasia,' in which he proposes that in all cases of hopeless or painful illness the physician may administer chloroform or some other anæsthetic, which may destroy consciousness at once, and put the sufferer to a quick and painless death. We may whisper with bated breath that the cure is by no means unknown when doctors have actually done something of the kind. A judge on circuit in the last century was actually asked whether, in certain cases, a patient's head might not be kept for a certain time between the bed and mattress. The judge immediately gave his opinion that such an action would be wilful murder. A practical answer would

be that there are so many instances of recovery, even in the most desperate cases where the doctors have abandoned hope. The utter impatience of all physical suffering, the hard thought of God and destiny, the blank hopelessness and unbelief, give some of the worst features of our times. There is a gentleman who has given notice of a motion at a philosophical society, that, under certain limitations, infanticide is a very useful institution, and ought to be recognized and permitted. Mr. Mill once got into trouble by circulating some of his practical notions.

We are not swimming in deep waters. We are only paddling about in the nearer bay. In order to compare varieties of opinion, we will just take one subject in moral philosophy with which most of us have some experience, probably a highly displeasing experience. That subject shall be the conscience, one that comes as close as may be to all of us, and the different views of the subject will fling a curious light on the history of contemporary opinion. Mr. Darwin, following such German writers as Buchner and Vogt, has hit out a theory of his own. He spoke of the moral sense of animals. He qualifies himself by saying that he does not wish 'to maintain that every strictly social animal, if its intellectual and social faculties were to become as active and as highly developed as man, would acquire exactly the same moral sense as ours.' But the only reason that he gives for this is that we are not under 'the same conditions.' Consequently, all moralities depend on 'conditions of life.' Of course such a theory denies that there is any standard of morality or any necessary truths in ethics.

Mr. Bain, whom some people

are pleased to consider the greatest philosopher we have, has promulgated a theory of conscience which is probably only one degree less absurd than Mr. Darwin's. It is one of the latest and least favourable forms of the Utilitarian theory in morals. He simply defines conscience as being the *opinion of the majority*. Moral truth is to be settled by the process of counting noses. He refers conscience to 'authority,' or 'punishment,' such authority being exercised, such punishment being inflicted, by 'the major part of every community.' According to him conscience is an artificial system of controlling actions. Every community, for self-existence' sake, lays down rules and coerces obedience by punishment. Mr. Bain says: 'It is the familiarity with the regions of compulsion and suffering, constantly increasing until resistance is overborne, that plants in the infant and youthful mind the first germs of the sense of obligation. It is not often that a philosophical argument is susceptible of being brought to the *reductio ad absurdum*, but we believe that this is the case in the present instance. It might, however, be observed that if the conscience only took cognizance of offences answerable to human tribunals, then the theory might be colourable. But conscience legislates on the quality of the thoughts and feelings and desires which are altogether removed from human punishment, and even from human knowledge. A hundred times a day a man shapes his conduct by the instinctive whisper of conscience, quite independently of the authority or punishment of the majority. Suppose immoral actions being enforced by the majority—and history shows us that this is no violent supposition—then we should have the

absurdity of man acting against his conscience in the ordinary sense in obedience to his conscience in Mr. Bain's sense. Or take the case of those who are prisoners, or who suffer 'for conscience.' Take the case of a martyr like Sir Thomas More, the Romanist, or Bishop Latimer, the Protestant and as one mounts the scaffold and the other the pyre, let us ask what is the meaning of their thus suffering for conscience' sake—and let us be satisfied if we can write the answer that their conscience only means the opinion of the majority, the dread of the punishment of the stronger power—that stronger power that will remit the penalty on their obedience. One of the most recent of the late Mr. Maurice's works was one on the 'Conscience,' in which he controverts the conclusions of Mr. Bain in a very different tone to that in which he attacked the late Dean Mansel, who described him as an unjust and ungenerous opponent. Mr. Maurice appeals to facts. He denies that any dread of punishment could induce our soldiers and sailors to do and endure all that they have. He alludes to the case of our brave soldiers who formed a line and sank with the Birkenhead. 'I need not tell you that these soldiers as little dreamed of doing a great and meritorious act as of escaping punishment. They simply did what they ought to do. Their business was to go to the bottom, and they went.' Mr. Maurice's work on conscience is slight, and for any adequate treatment of the subject we must go back to Butler's famous writings on Human Nature, those three immortal sermons which must very strongly have puzzled the little congregation in the Rolls Chapel. There is an exotic, erratic poet, who speaks of those who exchange

'The lilies and languors of virtue
For the roses and raptures of vice.'

So different to the true knight,

'Who revered his conscience as a king.'

There they will find that though the virtues may be overthrown by the passions—as the stately senators by the ruthless Goths—yet conscience is enthroned supreme amid our faculties, and her whispers predict all ultimate arbitration. I think I shall have done a good service to my readers, if I could only induce them, instead of being confused among the conflicting voices of our modern philosophers, to acquire that mental discipline, and that introduction into the deepest subjects which Butler gives. One of Butler's private speculations—whether nations may not go mad as well as individuals—must often occur to the student of modern history, and is well worthy of being worked out by one of the *illuminati*. It would be a useful rule that no one should be allowed to talk of Hamilton and Mill unless he had been grounded in the 'Analogy' and the 'Novum Organum.'

When we complained that philosophy hardly received recognition in England, we ought to have remembered that there is at least one source from which we obtain a perennial supply of philosophers. And there philosophers have always had the advantage of a liberal tincture of Butler and Bacon, not to mention Plato and Aristotle, with whom many of our philosophers have, we suspect, a somewhat shadowy and remote acquaintance. These are the young men who are fresh from the honour examinations of the first classical schools at Oxford. It does not very much matter whether they took a first or a third

—for, singularly enough, three of our best thinkers, Whately, John Henry Newman, and Archbishop Thomson, have been only third-class men—but the training is of a very peculiar kind, which it is somewhat difficult for non-Oxonians to understand. But the clever Oxonian always adds an immense amount of modern philosophical reading to the old books. He reads up the metaphysical Scotchmen, knows something at least about Kant and Hegel, and could pass a fair examination in Cousins and Comte. He is especially a great man for ‘modern ideas.’ His special function is to bring modern thought into relation with ancient ideas. He sparkles and glitters over examination papers, whereas perhaps some young examiner has sought to glorify himself by showing how thoroughly ‘up’ he is in all the philosophical notions of the day, abreast with all modern ideas. Mr. Tennyson has not published a poem forty-eight hours before the astute examiner has selected bits for Latin elegiacs or Greek iambics. The Oxford examination, twice a year, shows sets of remarkable papers, essays of the ‘Saturday Review,’ or the ‘Times’ order, full of point and power. In fact, such men are just the material from which good leader-writers and reviewers are made. Such men may not be leaders of our thinkers; but they at least form the main body of the army of our philosophers, and impregnate the public with philosophical ideas. To many men their intellectual pursuits are the only avenues open to promotion. Time was when the course of the brilliant undergraduate was watched with interest in London, and there was a seat in parliament ready for him as soon as he was competent to take it. In a reformed House of Commons there are no chances of

the kind; the race of orators and statesmen seem dying out; a seat is the expensive appendage to great wealth, and the House becomes more and more a public board for the transaction of office business. Then the clever graduate, often debarred from social distinction, betakes himself to the highest forms of intellectual work, which we hold to be philosophy. At the same time the Oxford system is open to criticism as having a sophistical element about it. The clever undergraduate of one-and-twenty plays with names and subjects as counters; he is well read in all the criticisms that concerns them, but he is not well read in the authors themselves, on whom the criticisms are based. He may master them thoroughly, but he certainly has not mastered them at the time when he is expected to answer terse questions, and write brilliant papers about them. The young Oxonian is at least well acquainted with what the Germans call *Die Sophistik*. They are acquainted with that remarkable corruption of the intellect which prevailed in Greece in the fourth century before our era, when the mind became venal, and was to be bought and sold as a mean instrument for personal purposes—the sentiment, that is exhibited at the English bar, finding a full expression in all paths of life. And imagine that there is a certain kind of insincerity and socialism in that incomplete course of study to which the highest University distinctions are awarded. Tennyson had his ‘black-browed sophist’ in view when he wrote the lines:

‘Smiling as the master smiles on one
That is not of his school, nor any school
Save that where blind and naked ignorance
Delivers brawling judgments unashamed
On all things all day long.

This flaw has been pointed out





Drawn by E. Buckman.]

THE WISHING WELL.

[See Page 65.]

by some of the ablest *alumnae* of Oxford, and the best wishers to their Zion. Still, it is a system which often produces its richest fruitage when the examination era is over, and which has produced such men as Hamilton and Ferrier. In any literary history of England, it will not be forgotten that almost the only formal philosophical training given in England is in the Honours school at Oxford. Cambridge excels her sister in scholarship, and probably in exact scholarship, but she has somehow found it impossible to graft upon her own system the peculiar honour-system of Oxford. We have pointed

out the defects incident to our becoming philosophers; but we might safely add that even these defects stimulate intellectual growth, and after all progress is the only safe condition, the only true law for the human soul. We can but hope that those studies that form the training of the most acute and cultivated minds of the youth of England will become more popularised among them all, and even that the sisters and sweet-hearts of our Oxonian will learn to take an intelligent interest in the studies of our young philosophers at the old University.

THE WISHING-WELL.

WHAT! you are come, despite your boast
You are not superstitious?
No faith in fairies, nor in ghosts,
Nor Wishing-Well? Delicious!

I know you better, and I hide
Within the hollow oak;
To the clear spring your wish confide—
Nor spring, nor I, will joke.

I see you've culled the small blue flower
I told you of last night;
You come, too, at the sunset hour,
Determined to be right.

You fix your eyes upon the ground,
Are counting nine times nine;
My mysteries your thoughts have bound—
Approach, sweet Geraldine.

There, now upon the steps you stand,
You gaze upon the wave,
The flowers poised within your hand,
Why, Geraldine, how grave!

You lightly laughed at all I said,
About the mystic spell,
And thrice you shook your pretty head
Against the Wishing-Well.

The Wishing-Well.

Some stronger faith enthral's you now,
 Your mirth owns some eclipse ;
 A shade of thought is on your brow,
 No smile upon your lips.

Your face reflected there you trace.
 And, by some fancy's freak,
 As you gaze down upon your face
 The waters seem to speak.

' Hail ! fairest form of womanhood
 That we have ever pressed
 On summer eve, amid the wood,
 Upon our peaceful breast.

' For many a maid has lingered here.
 And all her secrets told,
 And troubled us with lying tear,
 While wishing but for gold.

' And gallant youths from town and hall
 Have given us their trust :
 But, ah ! their love was hollow all,
 Another name for lust.

' We grant no wish that is not pure,
 No hope for selfish gain ;
 We love no love that can't endure—
 No pleasure void of pain.

' And now thrice welcome we bid you ;
 We know the sacred sign
 That marks a maiden pure and true,
 As you are, Geraldine !

' So drop the flower from your hand,
 We hold it fondly given ;
 Pause but one moment on the strand,
 And breathe your wish to Heaven.'

The flower falls ! the Well receives
 Your gift—and, also, mine ;
 No withered buds ; no Autumn leaves—
 Bright blossoms, Geraldine.

I hold your hand—to hold your heart .
 Soon in the marriage spell ;
 And thus we vow no more to part,
 Beside the Wishing-Well !

CHARLES LAURENCE YOUNG.

UNIVERSITY SKETCHES.

My First Visit to Newmarket, and its Fortunes.

I SHOULD say that there was no racecourse in the world, the pleasant features of whose characteristics as a place of sport are so long retained upon the memory, as the breezy Heath at Newmarket. Spite of increasing years, spite of a certain indifference to the pastime which is there enacted (that in most cases middle age brings with it), still the mere mention of the sport-suggesting name of Newmarket sends the thoughts galloping back at full speed to that (except during the time of race meetings) very dull, little, old-fashioned town, with its one long street, its White Hart, Rutland Arms, and other hostels, flat and empty for weeks and months in the year, brimming over with guests, noise, and excitement for a few days only, each now and again. That name—Newmarket, sends the thoughts galloping back, I say, to the Four-Mile Stable, the T. Y. C., the Beacon, Casarewich, Cambridgeshire, Four Mile, Yearling, and other courses, to the drags, tandems, dog-carts, to say nothing of equestrians coming spinning along that last straight mile which leads from Cambridge by the sporting Heath, to this citadel of horses, bets, and betting men. Do not the thoughts wander back too, not only to the pastime of far-famed Newmarket, but also to the pretty Hebe who presided over the liquid department of one of its well-known caravanserais? Am I not, whilst meditating on these things once again the careless, happy youth, imbibing cherry brandy, and half-chaffing, half-flirting with, and wholly making

a kind of love to, that fair damsel? Do not memories of gloves, rings, and pins, lost in bets to this syren, come floating across my mind (for somehow no one could ever win from Nelly), culminating, indeed, all these reminiscences with the recollection of that happy day, when this blue-eyed maiden rewarded my many losses with the loan of 'her very own,' as she assured me—her very own white pony, prince of hacks, for the Heath, whereon I rode in full turfite glory for the whole of one Houghton Meeting? Ah, I wonder, with my enlarged experience, if I should think beautiful the once so much admired Nelly! Beautiful, do I say? Pshaw! Could she now appear before me, even in her most engaging humour, and most charming attire, I should pronounce her doubtless rather plain, and decidedly ill-educated and vulgar. Well, 'Where ignorance is bliss it is folly to be wise,' so says the old proverb; and, maybe, even a barmaid's chaffing conversation had perhaps a humanizing effect upon those who only saw and conversed day after day for many weeks during Term time with the members of their own sex.

Well, then, Newmarket, spite of thy cheating, roping, pulling, legging, selling, nobbling, welching, and each all and several your grievous iniquities, I love thee still—love to dwell on the pleasant reminiscences which surround the mention of thy name—love thee as the place where I have spent many a joyous hour—love thee as a watchword reminding me of friends and pastimes

now numbered with the past. We boast, indeed, of our national carnival, Epsom, on the Derby Day; we talk of royal Ascot, lordly Goodwood, canny York, and Doncaster, all places to be proud of, and, indeed, unique in their several ways; but for real business in racing, uncombined with any other attraction, for sporting *par excellence*, for the race, the whole race, and nothing but the race, Newmarket beats every other place in the world. There may be seen England's national pastime in its greatest perfection. At Newmarket, say what any one may against it, racing is a business; it is the genius of the place, and we can call it by no other name. But to come to my first visit to this wide-awake, and, as to character, somewhat raffish little town. It was the beginning of my second year at college, the commencement of the October Term, and I had arrived in Cambridge only a few days previously, to enjoy the ease, comfort, and dignity which a scholarship at St. Margaret's College—one of the most lucrative ones in the University (I mean the scholarship, not the college)—gave me, when I received a telegram from my friend and old schoolfellow Marshman, a sporting lieutenant in one of her Majesty's regiments of foot Guards, telling me that he had met with a severe accident, by which he had sustained a compound fracture of his thigh; and begging me to proceed at once to London, as he wished to see me on most important and particular business, which admitted of no delay. At this stage of my narrative perhaps I may mention how it was that such terms of intimacy and friendship existed between myself and Marshman—a friendship and intimacy cemented by much stronger ties than mere schoolboy affection. Sir Reginald Marsh-

man, for the gallant but unfortunate officer (as far as his accident was concerned) was a baronet, owner of Chilton Harolds Abbey, a beautiful old place, and a somewhat heavily-encumbered estate of from ten to fifteen thousand a year. The late proprietor, Sir Reginald's father, was a fine sportsman of the old school, who always had a string of racehorses in training, was master of the Belton Hounds, which he hunted without a subscription, and kept open house for the whole county side, every one of which amusements, it must be admitted, was well calculated to assist in laying on the Marshman estates the somewhat heavy burden, under which not they only, but my friend, the guardsman, groaned. But a few months previous to the time of my story, by the death of his sporting parent, Sir Reginald had come into possession of his now somewhat out-at-elbows patrimony. My father, as rector of the parish, had been the late baronet's greatest friend; indeed, they were boon companions, for the churchman was not one whit behind the layman in his fondness for sport, and also in the happy knack of getting rid of the current coin of the realm. Brought up from childhood on terms of the greatest intimacy, sharing the same sports, governess, and tutor in our juvenile days, and being placed in the same form, and flogged by the same master in the schoolboy period which succeeded the time of petticoats and nursery and schoolroom discipline, no wonder that as we grew towards manhood Reginald and I were the most inseparable of cronies, and that we both felt the separation which the pursuit of my friend's profession of arms, and my career at the University had entailed upon us. Good, kind, jolly old Sir Augustus Marshman had been

more than the mere guardian to my sister and myself, a post which my father on his death-bed some few years back had asked him to fill. He had been the kindest and most considerate of friends; indeed, he had well supplied the loss we had sustained in the death of both parents, which happened within a few months of each other. It was at Chilton Harolds Abbey that we found a home, and it was the Rectory of Chilton Harolds which was being held for me until the time when I was either old enough, or felt sufficiently sober minded to take orders. Under the kind and loving care of dear, old-fashioned, motherly Lady Marshman, my pretty Sister Susan, the *fiancée* of her son, Sir Reginald, met with the most delightful chaperonage, and the most ample protection during the necessary absences of her brother at the University. So much, then, to account for my friendship for the young guardsman; and now to an uninterrupted account of my first visit to Newmarket and its fortunes.

To obtain an *exeat* from my tutor, and start for the gay metropolis immediately on Reginald Marshman's summons, was with me the work of a few hours; and the evening of the very day I received my future brother-in-law's telegram saw me closeted with him at his comfortable lodgings in St. James's Street. I found my old schoolfellow in bed, and suffering a good deal of pain from his broken limb, which catastrophe had been caused by a severe fall from a vicious horse, who, after having thrown my poor friend, rolled upon him, thus occasioned the misfortune.

'My dear fellow,' he exclaimed, in a voice broken with suffering, as I entered the apartment he used as a bedchamber. 'My dear

fellow, I am so glad to see you. You find me here, laid up with a broken thigh, and suffering horribly—all occasioned by that confounded brute, Hotspur. I told the poor old governor he was no good when he bought him; and now, bad luck to him, he has brought me to grief. But there's no use crying over spilt milk. Oh, my leg!' And he gave a groan of agony. 'I should not so much care about the accident nor the pain either, but, bad scan to it, of all times in the year—it could not possibly have occurred at a more unfortunate one for me—the commencement of the hunting season, and next week, too, the Houghton Meeting at Newmarket. You know,' he continued, 'the dear old dad, amongst other contrivances to get rid of any superfluous cash he might have about him, as if hounds and hunters were not sufficiently expensive luxuries, must needs be a patron of the Turf; and here am I, one of the poorest county gentlemen in the kingdom, saddled with a racing stud of twenty horses, or thereabouts, most of them entered in some confounded race or other, for which, I suppose, I must run them, as all the nominations being made in the trainer's, not my father's name, none are rendered void by his death.'

'But, my dear Reginald,' I exclaimed, 'why on earth do you not send them all to Tattersall's, sell them by auction for what they will fetch, and thus get rid of the expense and responsibility. I would give up the whole concern—horses, trainer, engagements, jockeys, and everything.'

'Well, so I did intend to do,' answered the young baronet, rather pettishly; 'but old Wall, the trainer, overpersuaded me to retain them all till after the Houghton Meeting, as he says, if

he only keeps well, Dragon Fly is a downright certainty for the Cambridgeshire, and, maybe, we shall pull off a few of the other stakes with some of the rest of the horses. On the strength of this information, I have backed the said Dragon Fly for a pretty stiff sum, for a poor man like me, in hopes of being able, with luck, to pay some of my training expenses; but—for there is always a but in every bit of seeming luck which happens to us Marshmans—but yesterday I received this really wonderful specimen of caligraphy from old Wall, who seems to have fallen amongst the Philistines at Newmarket (to which place he is gone with the horses to be ready for the meeting); and it is pretty evident, if something is not done at once, and somebody with a head on his shoulders is not at hand to advise and direct matters, Dragon Fly and my money will all go to the bad together.'

As my friend concluded, he handed to me his trainer's laconic letter, and then lay back on his bed exhausted by the pain of body and anxiety of mind from which he was suffering.

'Honoured Sir,' ran old Wall's somewhat blotted and queerly spelt epistle. 'Honoured Sir—Me and the horses arrived here safe three days ago, all well, specially Dragon Fly, who is fit as a fiddle and ready to run for a million. But they be queer chaps, they be, about this here Newmarket, and I 'spects aint after no good—a peeking and spying about after our horses. I cotched two chaps a walking about the yard yesterday as if the place were their own; and if that rascal Billy Dukes, who I engaged as an exner boy, aint a deep file, well, honoured sir, then I'll eat him, gaiters and all, that's flat. But this aint the worse—no by a goodish bit; there's

some plan about to get at Dragon Fly, and for the life of me I can't get at no bottom to it, tho' I'd give a year's wages, and more, to circumlocute the rogues. Why, honoured sir, just you look at the betting, and you will soon see there's something a gate; why, if our horse aint up and down like a bucket in a well. If you could only come down here till after the races, I do think we might manage to diddle these wide-awake coves in this here downy place; but two heads is better, they say, nor one, any day of the week, and you always was precious sharp, you were, meaning no offence by saying so, honoured sir. You must please, sir, to come down; for, what with the horses, Billy Dukes, a watching to find out what they are up to here, and all the other lads to look after, my old head is fairly addled, and mischief will, I fear, come of it all. Hoping to see you very soon, so no more at this time from your 'bedient servant, Jeremiah Wall. Mr. Sir Reginald Marshman, Baronet, Esquire.'

'Well, what do you think of that for a nice mess?' inquired my companion, as, laying down the letter which I had been reading by the window, I returned, laughing, to his bed-side, and took a seat thereon.

'I don't see anything to laugh at,' he continued, crossly; 'rather a matter for tears with me—the loss of I don't know how much money. What a precious set of rascals these Newmarket fellows must be! Why, they would steal old Wall's eyes out of his head whilst he was wide awake, that they would! He is, I believe, one of the best trainers and managers of horses in England; but he is no more fit to cope with the touts and legs who swarm at Newmarket, than he is fit to be Archbishop of Canterbury. Poor old

Wall! he is as honest as the day, and as innocent as a child. Oh, what a fool I have been,' groaned Marshman, 'not to get rid of the whole concern before it came to this!'

'Don't be angry with me for laughing at old Wall's letter,' I replied; 'it is enough to make the cat laugh, I am sure. But seriously, Reggy, I am very, very sorry. What is to be done?' For I was quite at a loss for any suggestion to make, to help my friend out of his difficulties.

'Well, I don't know, old fellow,' answered my friend. 'I am in a nice hole; for I cannot go to old Wall: the doctor says, if I stir, he will not answer for my life; and it was because two heads are better than one, as Wall truly observes, that I sent for you to advise me. Moreover, I can trust you, and that is more than I could most fellows, where horses and bets were concerned.'

'Anything in my power to help you, my poor Reggy,' I replied; 'but really, I fear I am even less able to cope with those touts and blackguards than good old Wall.'

'I am not so sure of that, my boy,' returned Marshman, looking up more cheerfully than before, as if some bright thought had struck him—'I am not so sure of that; you are a very clever fellow when you like. Did you not get a scholarship, or a fellowship, or a something-ship, not long ago, licking, I don't know how many swells out of the field, and ain't you going to be a wrangler, or disputer, or fighter, or something pugilistic, at Cambridge, by-and-by? I am not so sure you might not do a great deal better down at Newmarket, looking after the horses, than I could myself.'

'But, my dear Reginald!' I gasped out—for though, to a certain extent, fond of sport, it

almost took my breath away—the bare idea of a leading scholar at St. Margaret's College, Cambridge, that noble institution, second to none in the University, a future fellow, as I fondly hoped some day to find myself, an undergraduate known even in those early days of his university career to be aspiring after high mathematical and classical honours: the idea of such a one, taking charge of the racing stud of a sporting officer in the Guards, and laying his head alongside of old Wall's grizzly poll to 'circumlocute,' as he called it, the touts and rascals, and to bring Dragon Fly, fit as a fiddle, to the post on the eventful day of the race for the Cambridgeshire!—nothing could possibly be more preposterous, I thought; for what did I know about the tricks and dodges of the far-famed Heath? I had had other fish to fry, and other books to study, besides Ruff's 'Guide to the Turf.' If old Wall was green, slow, and innocent amongst the wide awake, what, in the name of wonder, was I? Why, a very *gobe-mouche* amongst the simple ones. 'My dear Reginald,' then I gasped out, 'what a most ridiculous idea! You know I would serve you in any way that lies in my power, not for your own sake alone, but for Susan's; only, how, in the name of goodness, am I, who know hardly anything of racing matters, save what I have occasionally heard from you, and have read in the papers—how am I to contrive to out-manceuvre a set of fellows, whose whole life is one continued scene of robbing and cheating?'

'I have thought of all that,' said my friend; 'and your being totally unknown upon the Turf, and also residing in Cambridge, an undergraduate to boot, will not excite the suspicions of those who are trying to get at my horse, even

if you are seen holding frequent converse and communion with old Wall. Besides, who knows, you might find out what these fellows are really after, and perhaps assist in preventing the accomplishment of their nefarious designs ?

'Well,' I answered, after a few moments' reflection, 'needs must when a certain gentleman drives.' It will not do for you to lose all the money for which, you say, you have backed Dragon Fly, if it can be prevented; besides, I must say, I should like, if possible, to outmanœuvre these scoundrels, and prevent them making a prey of Sir Reginald Marshman, as they have done, doubtless, of so many other young men.'

'That's right, old chap!' exclaimed my quondam schoolfellow, looking now much happier and at ease than he had hitherto done during our interview — 'that's right, old chap! I know, at any rate, you will do your best, and not allow an old chum, if you can stop it, to be defrauded and robbed.'

'I was going to make one condition, Marshman, when you interrupted me,' I said, 'and it was this—that you leave the matter, now I have undertaken it, entirely in my hands, and don't bother yourself any more about the business, but get well as fast as you can; or we shall have your good mother and Susan in a nice state about you. If the worst comes to the worst, and Dragon Fly is beaten, we can make up the money to pay your losses, some way or other, between us, and you can sell the stud, too, and thus get rid of the whole concern. Do you write to old Wall by to-night's post, saying you have placed everything in my hands to act for you as may seem best to me, and that I shall call, to have a talk

with him, on my way from town to Cambridge to-morrow afternoon.'

I spent the rest of that day and the morning of the following one with my sick friend; nor did we again revert to the subject of his stud until I was on the eve of departure; when Marshman put into my hands his betting-book, saying,

'Old fellow, as you are going to look after my horses, you must look after my bets too, and make the best of them you can. They say you are a deuce of a fellow at mathematics, so I should think you would be a good hand at figures in the ring. Here is also what will gain you admission into the enclosure and subscription rooms; so do whatever you think best, and luck go with you.' Thus saying, we parted.

As I journeyed to Newmarket on my way back to Cambridge, my thoughts were full of the business—a very foolish one as I thought—which I had undertaken. 'How on earth,' I kept saying to myself, 'can I prevent these scoundrels from getting at Reginald's horse? What can I do to ensure him winning this race?' I had said these words over to myself many times—I had thought them over so many more, that at length they had the same soporific effect, as the idea of the celebrated flock of sheep, going through a gap, one after another, is said to have upon the wakeful, and I fell into a doze. During the period that I slept that kind of wakeful sleep, which to a certain extent permits a knowledge of what is going on around, the words, 'The Fly,' seemed to be constantly striking upon my ear, amidst the buzz of the earnest conversation which my companions in the compartment (two flashily-dressed men of a very would-be sporting stamp) were holding. This now to me familiar sentence appeared to my comatose

brain at that time, to be repeated an infinite number of times, and, in my dreamy, listless state, I imagined that some trick of fancy was at play, and that the thoughts in reference to my friend's affairs, which had filled my mind before I fell into a doze, were still actively at work within me, and were producing the result, which I have endeavoured to describe. At a station before we arrived at Newmarket, the two men got out. This circumstance, and demand being made for the production of my ticket, roused me from my lethargy. As the train sped on its way, now thoroughly awakened from my slumbers, I was gazing in a purposeless manner round the carriage, when my eye lighted upon a piece of paper, folded in the form of a note, which was lying at the bottom of the compartment, where they of the flashy apparel had so lately been seated. Mechanically I picked it up, curiosity led me to open it, and no sooner had I done so than my gaze fell on the haunting familiar words, 'The Fly,'—that name which had been sounding so provokingly in my ears throughout the whole of my journey. I needed no other inducement to make myself master of its contents; those mysterious words had so roused all the inquisitive part of my nature, that I did not hesitate for a moment to peruse the document I held in my hand. It ran as follows:—

'DEAR CAPTAIN,

'A line from his Grace to say that The Fly is meant, and the young swell backs him for a dollop. Mind what you are about, for the horse is bound to win, if nothing can be done. You know it is safe to lay against a dead one. His Grace reports Saturday as the morning of trial, Four-mile Stable,

seven A.M.; so keep a sharp look out. Judge for yourself; but if the event comes off as they expect, Monday night, at the latest, for the dose of physic. Trusting entirely to you—as it is not the first time you have doctored a winner. Hoping to hear by the wires at latest on Tuesday morning—Yours, as you prove yourself,

'JOE.'

'What an extraordinary epistle!' I thought; 'how curiously these everlasting words, "The Fly," are for ever crossing my path!' With these reflections, I consigned the note to my pocket-book, meditating, as I wended my way out of the station—for I had arrived at Newmarket—whether or no this piece of paper, of which I had become possessed, could have any reference to Reginald Marshman's horse Dragon Fly; and, moreover, if I had thus accidentally obtained a clue to some dark plot whereby that horse was, as his trainer had termed it, to be 'got at,' and in this way be prevented winning the Cambridgeshire in the following week. This being my first visit to the little sporting town situate, as the advertisements call it, on the borders of the counties of Suffolk and Cambridgeshire, I was obliged to impress into my service a small but shrewd-looking urchin whom I found playing at pitch-halfpenny with some equally wide-awake-looking companions just outside the station gates; and to induce him, under the promise of the liberal reward of sixpence, to show me the way to the stables, where the faithful Wall had deposited himself and his precious charges. As I followed my juvenile guide up the now deserted street, I could not help thinking to myself, surely this dull, stupid, deadly-lively little town is not the pandemo-

nium it is represented to be!—surely, not half the iniquity can be transacted here which is currently reported to be carried on. It is a gross libel on the place! why, all seems as flat as ditch-water, and everything around as quietly sedate and ponderously slow as the close of a cathedral city. I had certain reasons afterwards to alter my opinions, but such were my reflections as I wended my way, for the first time, up the street of this sporting *locale*. I found the old trainer had fixed his quarters at the farthest end of the town, closely abutting upon the Heath, and that he had engaged, for the accommodation of himself and his charges, a cottage and set of stables forming a quadrangle, having a paved yard in the centre, and approached by a short gravel drive, terminated on the road-side by a pair of massive folding-doors. A strong pull at the door-bell, the handle of which was attached to a short chain, and hung outside, as is not unfrequently seen at the entrances to some of our gaols, produced a loud peal which broke on the evening breeze in solemn tones. A harsh voice from the inside demanded my business, and upon my replying, that I wished to see Mr. Wall, a smaller door in the large folding one was opened, and the well-known, short, round, fat form and bandy legs of my friend's trainer stood before me. Pulling at his hat in an old-fashioned and respectful manner, as soon as he recognised me, the old man exclaimed—

'Eh, sir, then I'm mortal glad to see you; but how be Sir Reginald—sad business this about his accident; but step inside, sir, I be obliged to keep these big doors shut constant like, there is so many peeking, prying chaps about with their "how are your, Mr.

Wall—fine string of horses, yours, Mr. Wall—noble sportsman, Sir Reginald Marshman, Mr. Wall," till I'm sick to death of their jabber,' and here my companion spit upon the ground, in token, I suppose, of his nausea and disgust.

As we walked side by side up the short drive which led to the stables, I asked after the health of the horses, which the trainer declared to be most satisfactory, winding up his eulogium on their beauty and condition, by an assurance that I should see them all directly, 'though, he feared, I know'd but little about such like things, as how should I, when I was so book learned as he'd been told.'

Though certainly not being well versed in stable secrets and stable management, I had not lived so long at Chilton Harolds Abbey, under the protection of its late sporting owner, nor had I been the bosom friend of its present possessor, without imbibing some little smattering of knowledge on such subjects, and it had rather been want of time to spare from my studies, than a lack of inclination which had made me forego the delights of hunting and other sporting pursuits. However, I refrained from making any reply to Wall's rather uncomplimentary remarks on my knowledge of horses, and horses' affairs, and followed the old man, who, taking a key from his pocket, opened the door of an adjacent stable and bid me enter.

'There, sir,' he exclaimed, as soon as we were fairly inside, and he had carefully closed the door; 'if that ere aint a beauty, I never seed one. Legs clean and fine as a colt's, coat like satin, eye like fire, quarters of a hunter, speed of a steam-engine—that's what I calls a race-horse, and no mistake.

Oh, if Sir Reginald could only see un, he knows a horse, he do, when he casts his eyes over un.'

'Well,' I exclaimed, as the trainer swept the clothing gently over the horse's quarters, 'he does seem a very perfect horse, is he the favourite for the Cambridgeshire, Dragon Fly?'

The old man stepped back a pace or two, looked carefully and scrutinizingly around, peeped through the key-hole, then picking up a straw from the litter beneath his feet transferred it to his mouth, came close up to my side, and hoarsely whispering in my ear, said, 'That's about the ticket, sir. How can you find any fault in un?'

As I certainly could not conscientiously do so, even had I felt disposed, I merely answered, 'Well, he is a fine animal, but will he win?'

'Will he win?' said he, of the bandy legs, meditatively, chewing at his straw. 'Will a duck swim? Yes, sir, as sure as you are standing there if—' and the old man's face fell at the if—'if those rascals will but let un alone. Eh, sir,—he went on with almost a whimper in his tone—'eh, sir, the turf b'ant what it were in my young days; eh, it were sport for gentlemen and aristocrats then, but now, what with the cheating, nobbling, ropeing, and pulling, it is only fit for blackguards and such as them.'

'Well,' I said, cheerfully, to encourage the ancient servitor, 'well, but, Wall, we must try, and stop these rascals from doing anything to the horse, for Sir Reginald has a very heavy book indeed upon the race, and it would be nearly ruin to him just now to lose so much money.'

'I be mortal sorry to hear on it,' replied my companion, 'mortal sorry these chaps are so desperate,

wide awake, cunning, and greedy, they'd sell their grandmother's bones to make ninepins of, and steal a man's teeth out of his head whilst he was wide awake, and he be none the wiser for it.'

It certainly did not seem a very happy prospect for my friend, that his chance of winning some ten thousand pounds depended upon an honest, but guileless, old country trainer, and a green, innocent youth from the adjacent university, being able to frustrate the knavish tricks of a set of fellows, gifted with such powers as those described by my companion; but still to encourage that worthy, I replied, 'Well, we must do our best for Sir Reginald's sake, that is all, and then we must trust to the chapter of accidents to pull him through, as the saying is.'

A pitying smile sat upon the old man's face, as, turning round to me, he merely gave a grunt which might mean either approval or the reverse, and taking up the horse's clothing busied himself with adjusting it. We visited several other boxes, and saw several other animals, some, as far as I could judge, very nice-looking horses indeed, but none approaching either in beauty or form to the Dragon Fly, the subject of all our thoughts and cares.

'None so good looking as Dragon Fly,' I said, as we approached the door of what I fervently hoped was the last stable to be inspected, for I was getting very sick of the business. 'None so good looking as Dragon Fly, eh, Wall?'

'Not within miles,' replied that worthy, 'not at no weight at all. What's six stone two to such a horse as that? You see, sir, the old master would run that horse, but half prepared, consequently, he was beaten shameful; and Sir Augustus wanted to sell un, but

I said, said I, he'll win a good stable yet, he will, so he kept on, and now he's in the Cambridgeshire at no weight at all to speak on, cause they thought he must be good for nought, he did run so mortal bad when he was brought out before.'

As Wall finished this speech we had entered a loose box and were standing alongside of what appeared to me, enveloped, as he was, in his clothing, the very identical Dragon Fly of which we had been speaking, so uncommonly like were the two animals.

'What is this?' I exclaimed. 'Why we have been here before; is not this our Cambridgeshire favourite again?' I looked fixedly at the horse. 'Yes, surely it is, is it not?'

A chuckling laugh, and a—

'Well, sir, they be somewhat alike, leastways, why should they not, seeing they are half brothers? But there be just as much difference between them as there is between a butcher's hack and the winner of the Derby. I calls that horse rubbish, I do. He'll never win no race, or no man a sovereign, and so I told Sir Reginald and his father, but they thought different.'

When I came to see the subject of our conversation stripped, and to examine him more critically, even to my unpractised, uninitiated eyes, he did seem, though very like in colour, height, and make, a different sort of animal altogether, being much weedier and lighter built in all respects than the redoubtable Dragon Fly. As I stood silently gazing on this half brother to our favourite, still struck with the strong likeness to his more perfect relative, and meditating painfully on the note in my pocket-book, and what was best to be done thereon, a brilliant thought flashed upon my mind,

and for the first time since I had so reluctantly undertaken the temporary management of my friend's racing affairs, a hope dawned upon my mind, that even innocent as we were, still old Wall, assisted by my counsel and advice, might defeat the machinations of the enemies of his pet, and by winning the Cambridgeshire stakes with him, his master's money might be made secure. Taking the old trainer gently by the arm, I led him from the stable, saying, 'Just send for a trap, to be here in half an hour to take me into Cambridge, and after that I want to speak a few words to you in your own room, if I can.'

At a shout for Billy Dukes, a cock-eyed, slouching, blackguard-looking youth made his appearance, who the trainer at once dismissed to the White Hart with an order for the trap to be at the stables in half an hour, and then led the way to the cottage in the midst of the stable yard, where he had taken up his abode.

As soon as we were safely inside, I exclaimed, 'From where, on earth, my good man, did you pick up that villainous-looking boy. Why, to judge by his appearance, he would rob a church.'

'Eh, no doubt on it, sir, that he would, and murder the parson too if he could get the chance. Why, you see, I was very short of a lad to help in the stables, and this un came (hearing as I wanted a boy) with a good recommend from the Hon. Captain Cowslip, and so I engaged un.'

'But there is no such name as Cowslip in the Peerage, I am sure,' I said, 'so depend upon it that it was a false character; therefore the sooner you get rid of the truculent-looking vagabond the better.'

'Well, I should have given un the sack afore this, you may

depend, sir,' replied old Wall, stroking his short-cropped hair with his hand as he removed his hat; 'but he's a rare good un along of horses; never seed a better; and I thought, maybe, as he knows the place in and out so well, he was less dangerous within these walls than outside them.'

'There is some truth in that,' I answered; 'but we must get rid of him some way, and yet prevent him from doing us any mischief to boot.'

'Easier said nor done, sir,' answered the trainer. 'Mind, I don't know anything the lad has been up to, but I have my suspicions.'

'Mine are not only suspicions, but certainties,' I said, as, taking out the note I had picked up in the railway carriage, I handed it to the old man, telling him at the same time where I had found it, and bidding him read it carefully through. This he did, taking several moments to arrive at its contents, and scratching his head vehemently in his excitement as he did so. At length he seemed to have mastered its meaning and purport, for, dashing his fist heavily on the table, he exclaimed, with rather a violent exclamation—

'What a set of villains. How I wish I had un here at this moment.'

'Then you think, with me,' I said, 'that The Fly here alluded to is our horse, Dragon Fly, do you not? and that there is some plot hatching, by means of which these blackguards may get at him, and make him safe from winning the race, either by physic, poison, or some other means?'

'That's it, sir, you may depend,' he answered. 'But who is his Grace? I can't make that part of the letter out no how.'

'Oh!' I replied, 'that, I think, is sufficiently clear; his Grace is a nickname for your villainous-looking stable-boy, Billy Dukes, derived from his titled surname, your Grace being the mode of addressing ducal members of the peerage.'

'Oh! I sees now, sir,' said the trainer, with a broad grin on his wrinkled old face. 'Well, you be mighty 'cute to find all this out, surely.'

'But, now,' I said, 'what on earth is to be done?' And we looked blankly at one another for a few moments. As Wall, however, seemed utterly at a loss for a reply, I ventured to give birth to an idea which had been working in my brain ever since I had been struck with the strong general likeness of Dragon Fly's half-brother to that noble steed himself, an idea that appeared to me to be, if properly carried out, the only chance—a desperate one, to be sure—which we had of averting the machinations which were being directed against our favourite for the Cambridgeshire. 'I do not imagine,' I said, 'that, knowing, as that young gaol-bird Billy Dukes does, every hole and corner of this place, we could possibly keep out the ruffians who are anxious to physic our horse; for he can, doubtless, both show the way in, and be ready to assist them, if necessary, at the job besides. Nor do I altogether fancy sitting up, watching for their coming, and trying to take them prisoners in the very act, for two reasons: firstly, because we might be too late to save our horse; and, secondly, we should then only punish, perhaps, the least guilty in this affair, whilst the real instigators of the crime escaped scot free. No, I would rather, on this occasion, oppose cunning to cunning,

if possible, and meet craft with craft; for, by so doing, I think, with anything like care and luck, we might teach the scoundrels a lesson (which they will never forget) through the medium of their pockets, a strong argument with every Englishman. What, therefore, I advise, is this. Having sent Billy Dukes out for an hour or so, under some excuse or other, on the evening before the race, you, Wall, must yourself, unseen by any one, if possible, change the stables of the two horses, Dragon Fly and his half-brother, putting our Cambridgeshire favourite into his brother's stall, and the brother into Dragon Fly's box. The likeness between the two racers is so strong, that, in the hurry of attempting to physic the horse, and by the imperfect light of a dark lantern, which they will be obliged to use, I fancy even that scoundrel Billy Dukes will not perceive the change that has been made; and thus a merely worthless animal will be doctored, whilst our valuable one will be preserved. Moreover,' I continued, 'let the trial you intend to have on Saturday morning take place all the same. Make a great fuss about it before your stable-lads, and pretend to be desperately afraid lest the result of that important event should be witnessed by any one, and thus be made known to the public. This will, in a certain degree, put Billy Dukes off the right scent, and he will, of course, report all that takes place; which will only make Dragon Fly's enemies the more anxious than ever to get at him, and make him safe.'

Old Wall's large, round, owl-like eyes were turned upon me in blank astonishment as I unfolded my plan, and he stared at me in speechless amazement for some moments after I had finished

speaking, unable to utter a word. At last he burst out with—

'Lord, dang my buttons! but you be an oudacious gentleman. To think of a Cambridge scholar a-thinking of such a game as that. Well, I am blowed; but it's mortal good; and if only we can carry un through, why, the race is as good as over.'

'Well,' I said, 'all rests with you, Wall. The plan is very simple, and easily carried out, with anything like due precaution. It will be best, for many reasons, that I should not appear here again until the day of the race. Billy Dukes may think there is something up if he sees us much together. Just mind what you are about; and, depend upon it, all will be well. Good-night. I hear the sound of wheels; and that imp of mischief you have got here shall not find me closeted with his employer, or he may, as the saying is, "smell a rat."'

Fortunately I was in time to meet Billy Dukes, as he returned from his errand, before he reached the trainer's cottage; so, shouting to Wall, by way of a blind, that 'I would put the money on as he wished it,' I mounted the vehicle which was waiting for me, and drove off.

As I sped along that excellent road which leads from the little town famous for sporting to its larger sister celebrated for learning, whilst the chill October breeze refreshingly fanned my hot cheeks, flushed and burning with the excitement of my interview with my friend's faithful trainer, I pondered seriously over and over the position in which I found myself placed; but look at the matter in every way I could, there appeared to me no chance of getting out of my difficulties, and saving Reginald Marshman's pocket, but following the plan I had laid down

for old Wall to pursue; and if that worthy is but ordinarily cautious, I muttered to myself as I crossed the Quad, and ascended the staircase to my rooms, on my arrival in college—if he is but ordinarily cautious, all ought to go well. The next few days were to me anything but ones of pleasure. I had determined to keep my own counsel, and not to tell anyone of my friends, at any rate till the race was over, how I had been employed. I had, therefore, no sympathizing ear wherein to pour the anxieties which weighed upon my spirits, or any friendly voice to offer me comfort and advice. To tell the truth, I rather dreaded the chaff which I should have to endure (some of it, perhaps, even reaching the ears of the dons) at the bare idea of a sober scholar of far-famed St. Margaret's, taking charge of a friend's racing-stud, even for a season, and setting his brains to work, to out-plot, and out-manceuvre a set of rogues and legs, instead of solving problems in Euclid and Algebra. On closely studying Reginald Marshman's betting-book (for my knowledge of figures rendered me tolerably *au fait* at that part of my trust), I found matters were much more serious than he had given me to understand, and that having accepted all kinds of bets, and all sorts of odds, he stood to lose, if his horse was beaten, a much larger sum than he himself, perhaps, at all imagined. This fact, it may well be supposed, did not render me less nervous or less anxious about the result of my plan than I had been before. The time which intervened between my first visit to Newmarket, and the day of the race, was indeed to me a period of fear and trembling. I could neither settle down to study, or to the perusal of any lighter kind of literature, nor

could I take part in the sports and pastimes of University life. I wandered about moodily, and alone. My friends rallied me, declaring I was in love; I could neither eat nor sleep; the responsibility of my situation, and the dread lest, by bad management, I should tend farther to embarrass my unfortunate friend, haunted me day and night, like a dreadful 'dream,' wherever I went. At length the dreadful morning arrived, and rather to the astonishment of some of my sporting friends, who looked upon me as a good fellow enough, but a horrid muff, I announced my intention of honouring Newmarket races with my presence that day, craving permission to occupy a vacant seat on the St. Margaret's drag, as the spicy four-in-hand we sent out from that college was termed. I could not endure, such was my anxiety of mind, the burden of my own company, and therefore preferred the gay and noisy throng who crowded our drag, spite of their chaff, to the solitary grandeur of a trap of my own. Immense was the amount of chaff I had to endure, but in the then state of my feelings I think I rather liked it than not. 'Wonders sure will never cease when works of art do so increase,' sang out one; 'only fancy the pale student of St. Margaret's a-going to the races.' 'Oh, fie, for shame,' cried another; 'what will Daddy Doodles'—for by this disrespectful name our erudite and venerable senior tutor was designated by the faster order of undergraduates—'what will Daddy Doodles say at his pet coming out in a sporting character, and going to that naughty, vile place, Newmarket;' whilst a third wag insisted, amidst shouts of laughter, that my mathematical studies had enabled me to square the circle, to find out the philo-

sopher's stone of betting, and that therefore being sure of always winning and never losing, I was all anxiety to go to the races to test my discovery in the ring. 'What shall you back?' they all went on chaffing, as we bowled away towards the scene of the day's amusement. 'Is Dragon Fly'—(they little knew the burden of my thoughts whenever that name was mentioned)—'is Dragon Fly, or Medusa, or the Doctor, your fancy?'

Arrived at Newmarket, we put up at one of the smaller hostels, and feeling cold, and rather shaky about the nerves, I followed some of my hilarious companions to the bar, where I purposed to refresh the inner man with a glass of cherry-brandy. The fair Hebe who presided over the liquor department (we became great friends afterwards, as I have before observed), when I entered the place of glasses, bottles, and noggins, was holding a conversation with a flashy, dark-complexioned, sinister-looking man, who, upon his turning round, I immediately recognized as one of my travelling companions of a few days previous. However, he evidently did not remember that he had ever seen me before, for he stared in an impudent sort of manner, but without any sign of recognition, as I asked for the refreshment I required, and seemed rather to resent my attracting the attention of the pretty barmaid than to be annoyed by any memory of having previously seen me. As I did not wish he of the flashy apparel to stare long enough at me to recall the fact to his mind that we had met before, I swallowed my cherry-brandy and strolled away, asking a very sporting undergraduate whom I knew, and chanced to meet as I came out, who the barmaid's companion might be?

'Oh!' said Grindon, 'that is Dash, one of the ring, keeper of a betting-list in London, and one of the biggest rogues in the kingdom, as I know to my cost; so don't you have anything to do with him, or you'll get the worst of it, that's all.'

'Not very likely,' I said, as I turned away, muttering under my breath; and I fervently trust he may not have had anything to do with my precious charge, the Fly as he calls him.

As the first of the events on the card for that day was about to come off immediately, I determined, as most prudent, not to pay any visit to Wall at the stables, therefore, mounting my hack, I rode off to the Heath. I was in far too anxious a frame of mind, filled with doubts and fears as to the success of my plan, to take much of an interest in the races which preceded the one for the Cambridgeshire stakes. Nor could I find any appetite at all for the very profuse and tempting luncheon our fellows had brought with them, and which was being discussed in the interval previous to the great event of the day. So, swallowing a few glasses of champagne to keep up my spirits, I cantered off in the direction of the stables where Wall had taken up his quarters, to see if I could either meet with or hear anything about the old fellow. I had not ridden far when I espied, at a little distance, a small party coming towards me, and putting up my hand in order that I might see more clearly, I quickly recognized Marshman's trainer (who was leading a horse) as the central figure of the approaching group. I galloped up, almost breathless with fear and excitement, and could hardly gasp out, my heart beat so rapidly, 'Well, Wall, how is Dragon Fly?' The old fellow

merely winked one of his owl-like eyes, as, touching his hat, he said, with the most imperturbable gravity, and with the most stolid air, 'Morning sir, hope I sees you well.' I could have throttled my friend's ancient retainer with the greatest pleasure for not at once putting me out of my misery by answering directly the question I had asked him: but arguing from Wall's manner that all was well, and thinking he might have some good reason for his reticence, I forbore to make any remark. As I rode alongside of the sheeted object of my hopes and fears, now accompanied by two stable boys, the smallest of whom was to steer him in the race, I could not help feeling much reassured by the light springiness of Dragon Fly's step, and the happy careless demeanour of his attendant. Arrived at the saddling enclosure, old Wall led his horse to a quiet and somewhat secluded corner, and, beckoning me to him, drew me aside, and hoarsely whispered in my ear, whilst a look of triumph illumined his features, 'All right, sir, fit to run for a kingdom; you may put your shirt on it if you like. I'd back un for a million.' Whatever old Wall's oracular declaration, 'that I might back un for my shirt' might mean, I had not the most remote conception; but a bright thought did come into my mind that, as it was such a certainty, I might win yet some more money for my impoverished friend by backing, for a farther sum of a hundred pounds, this miraculous animal I had helped to save from such peril. The spirit of gambling broke out with me for the first, and, I am glad to say also, for the last, time in my life. Perhaps it is a disease like the measles, and we must all have it once; but, be that as it may, I have never had any return

of the mania, not even to play at whist for sixpenny points. Reflecting that I had a few hundreds in the world (the whole of my patrimony, in fact) lying in all the dignified security of the 3 per Cents., I determined to speculate upon this occasion with a couple of these hundreds on my own and my friend's behalf. So, galloping back to the ring, to which enclosure Reginald's passport gave me admittance, and pulling out his betting-book, I boldly asked what any one would lay against Dragon Fly? Had that animal been dead and buried, as I daresay his enemies fondly hoped he was, instead of alive, well, and fit to run, as old Wall termed it, for a million, a greater anxiety could not have been displayed to put money on against him. A perfect storm of offers assailed me, and such a jargon of sounds met my ears, as to confuse my head for a moment. I should think every ringman on the Turf, seeing a beardless, verdant-looking, and strange youth amongst the Philistines, asking for the odds against a horse which they evidently considered, if not quite deceased, as good as defunct, thought that now was the time to make a little money. Ten, fifteen, eighteen, twenty, twenty-five, thirty, and even forty to one, in fivers, ponies, and monkeys, were all thrown at, and thrust upon me, until I could have booked an enormous fortune had I felt so disposed. Selecting as respectable and substantial-looking an individual as I could find (my selection fortunately turned out satisfactorily) from amidst this betting confraternity, I leaned forward in my saddle, made known to him, as quietly as I could, my wish to back Dragon Fly, and my willingness to accept thirty to one in hundreds twice if he felt disposed to lay it. He looked at

me for a moment with a scrutinizing, searching gaze, as if trying to penetrate my knowledge of Turf matters; and then, apparently satisfied with the result of his inspection of my ingenuous countenance, whipped out a vast ledger, and said, 'I'll put you down six thousand to two hundred. Will that do, sir?'

'Very well, thank you,' I replied, with as cool an air as I could assume; and, recording the bet and name of the layer in my book, I rode off. I arrived just in time to see our horse (on whose turn of speed so much of my old schoolfellow's fortune, and now of my own, depended) come forth, preceded by old Wall (who looked radiant), and guided by the small stable lad (who had now mounted), decked in the smart colours of his racing jacket, bright blue body, and crimson sleeves. I do not pretend, even at this date, to be a judge of horseflesh, either their shape or condition—to me such matters ever have been a sealed book; but no sooner did my eyes at that time fall on the richly-brilliant satin of Dragon Fly's bay coat, the hard, knotty-like appearance of every muscle as they stood out over his powerful quarters, the fire of his eye, and the quiet good temper he displayed, though surrounded by, what to him must have been, most unwonted sights and sounds, and which might have irritated almost into frenzy even an amiable quadruped—an effect evidently produced upon some of his compeers, for they were rearing, kicking, squealing, and careering about in a most eccentric style. No sooner did I see all this than I felt that, at any rate, if our pet did not win, he would be beaten on his own merits, and that no plot to do him harm had succeeded against him.

After following our horse to the

starting-point, I galloped back to the winning-post, and took up my position as nearly opposite to the judge's chair as was permitted, for from that part of the course I rightly concluded I should better see the finish, as it is called, than from any other. The race, in so far as I was concerned, was a mere confused rush of horses, of cries, 'Jupiter wins!—no, Medusa leads!—Placeman wins!—The Doctor wins, The Doctor wins!—Blue wins!—No, Orange!—No, Black,' and other shouts, as each man's favourite seemed to have a chance in the race. A pair of stentorian lungs close by my side literally yelled forth, with a plentiful admixture of oaths of the most awful nature, 'The Fly wins! The Fly wins!' I moved round for a moment, and found that my travelling companion of the flashy clothes was beside me, pale as death, gnashing his teeth, and cursing as I never heard a man curse before or since; when I again turned my head to the course Dragon Fly's number was conspicuous on the judge's board as the winner, and the victory was ours. Old Wall and a verdant undergraduate of St. Margaret's had checkmated a set of legs and blackguards accustomed to roguery from their youth up. It must be confessed the odds were rather long against us at one time, but how completely we had won the game, the face of rage, disappointment, and hate, at my side, told but too plainly. Old Wall, when I rejoined him after all was over, was nearly beside himself with delight.

'Dang it, sir,' he said, with a broad grin on his wrinkled face—'dang it, sir,' but that was an artful dodge o' yours, the artfullest I ever know'd. Why, the rascals, for I watched un, you may depend, came at it on that very Monday night, and that young

gallows bird, Billy Dukes, let un in. How I did chuckle and laugh, fit to bust my sides, all the time they were in the stable physicking poor Jumper, though I was mortally afraid Billy would find it all out. He is such a 'cute un. My wigs! but they did give the poor beast a penn'orth, and no mistake. I ain't certain the horse will get over it. They shoved so much laudiney into un. Eh, sir, but you heard un in the ring a-betting against the horse? Why, they thought he was dead, to a moral.'

'But how did you get rid of Billy Dukes?' I asked, with some curiosity.

'Oh, that was the capitallest thing of all,' exclaimed the old man. 'The young villain asked me for leave to go out for an hour just as it was getting dark on Monday night. I guessed what he was at, but I precious soon gave un permission; and I've never seen un since, except for a moment when he showed the way into the stable. Blowed if he ain't gone clean off, a-taking with un my best top-coat, a whip, five sovereigns in gold he got out of my desk, and my father's old silver watch; but he be quite welcome to un now, that he be.'

But, to cut a long story short, Reginald Marshman soon recovered from his accident; and, after gathering in as many of his bets as made a very handsome amount of cash, though some of his debtors were defaulters, as may be expected, he sold his racing stud, together with the now-famous Dragon Fly, for a considerable sum of money; nor has he or his friend ever speculated upon the Turf since. I decline to say what

became of my winnings, which my friend steadfastly refused to consider his own, though I pressed him much to do so. In passing, however, I may observe that my sister's fortune on her marriage, a few months after the events I have been relating, was from four to five thousand pounds, although she only inherited a few hundreds from our father. I was very much amused at the looks of wonder and astonishment—nay, the almost awe, with which my friends listened to the story of my adventures, retailed for their edification at a large supper party given to celebrate Dragon Fly's victory, and, on his recovery, my friend Marshman's visit to me at the University. That a reading man, a sap, a slow like myself, should come out in such sporting colours it really was, as good Domine Sampson expressed it, 'Prodigious!' Our good old tutor, Daddy Doodles, as he was nicknamed, who heard through some channel of my exploit, sent for me to demand an explanation; and, upon my giving him full details of what I had done, and my reasons for doing it, he said, very naively, 'Pray, my dear sir, do not do so again; but I am very glad you managed to disappoint those scoundrels.' The Dash betting-offices in London shut up after the Cambridgeshire victory, nor was Mr. Dash ever seen in England again. I suppose at that time I must have been bitten with a liking for the breezy Heath, for, although I never ventured another shilling in the ring, I am bound to confess my first was not quite my last visit to the sporting little town of Newmarket.

AN OCTAVE OF FRIENDS.

BY E. LYNN LINTON.

V.

THE MUSTELAS.

IT is a privilege to visit the Mustelas. They understand it so themselves, and make you know that they do. For the Mustelas are people who receive only the absolutely flawless into their acquaintance, and hold no relations with the sinful, the indiscreet, or even the unlucky. Their society, they say, must be pure and not contaminated by the admixture of doubtful elements. Hence, their friendship is, as it were, a seal on the character of any one they affect; and you are assumed to be 'all right' if you are met at the Mustelas. Patronized by them, no one can possibly object to you; for they are so very particular, they would not countenance you for a moment if you were shaky in any way.

To be sure, odd stories concerning themselves are afloat—stories which I do not like to detail at length; for who can say whether they are true or not? But what was that about Mustela and the little governess, and Mrs. Mustela's extraordinary complaisance, ever so many years ago? And indeed, did not Mrs. Mustela do something queer on her own account? Did she not run away from school? or deceive her parents about her marriage? or do something hazy, and that will not quite bear the light of day, since her marriage? I have a vague kind of idea that, as all is not gold that glitters in the material world, so all is not so impeccable

as it seems in the moral. All that is past now, however; and Mrs. Mustela is the rigid demander of absolute faultlessness in her friends, and the rigid denouncer of those famous peaches to which the younger Dumas introduced the world—at five sous each.

In their zeal for moral perfection the Mustelas are perhaps rather too apt to believe evil of others. You see, being so sensitive as they are about straight lines, they are keener sighted than most others in the matter of crookedness. The consequence of which is that, let the most absurd reports be set afloat concerning you, and the Mustelas are the first to look grave and to insist on a full explanation. And as we all know that to live down ill-natured reports by steadfast bearing and a certain lofty ignoring them, is often times better policy than to make a stir about them, and confront and confute them, the Mustelas simply hound you on to your destruction. It may be valiant, but is it wise to take by the horns the raging bull bellowing at you like an angry Jove, yet who is unable to hurt you so long as you keep your own side of the hedge and let him alone? But this is substantially what the Mustelas require you to do, if you are their friend. If any slander is thrown out against you, you must 'meet it;' and call heaven and earth to witness that you are innocent; and demand your slanderer's authority;

and set your whole society in a flame, and every tongue wagging; and so dig the thing into people's minds, when, if you had but gone your own way and held your tongue and never minded, it would have passed like yesterday's cloud, and been forgotten as soon. Being, however, the friend of the Mustelas, you are bound to leap the fence and take the bull by the horns; and if you do not, they cut you, and tell their friends that they are sure you cannot stand a scrutiny, and that you have certainly done something very shameful which you are aware will be found out if you call attention to yourself on that particular matter.

Once they cut me because I was connected with a certain publication, the literary tone of which they disliked; and I would not, being bound in honour to silence, disclaim the authorship of one or two specific articles at which they had taken offence. As it happened, I had not written the papers in question; but the credit of them was enough for the Mustelas, and double-locked the house door against me for many a month. It opened again only when I wrote the play which set all the town agog, and carried my name in blue and green letters a foot high through every railway station in England. And the Mustelas like to have as their friends people whose names are written in blue and green letters a foot high, and placarded against the walls as celebrities.

This zeal for the absolute purity and impeccability of their friends extends itself to their friends' friends, and still more remote relations. You were seen with the Golightlys, were you? The Mustelas wait on you in solemn conclave, and put it to you with affected earnestness, how can you expect to know them, the spotless

Mustelas, when you know the doubtful Golightlys? They are very sorry, they say, but the man who can be seen with Captain Golightly is not the man they would care to associate with; and he who can give his arm to Mrs. Golightly is not fit to shake hands with their daughters. They feel it incumbent on them to decline all further intercourse with you, unless you will consent to purge your visiting list according to their directions. Some one must keep a high standard they say, and they assume to themselves that lofty office.

I can scarcely reconcile their assumptions with their practice; and when I see them hand in glove with the Honourable Mr. Flashband, I confess I am puzzled, and wonder what they have done with their winnowing machine in this instance, and why they have laid it aside on his behalf. For the Honourable Mr. Flashband is notorious enough in his way—and that way is not a very honourable one. But then he is wealthy; and John Luckless, another of my taboo'd friends—whose feet, by the way, have never strayed so deep into the mire as Flashband's—is poor; and say what we will, money does gild the iniquities of the aristocracy, while poverty and rags make the slips of the vulgar very shameful things! I see them, too, a good deal about with Lady Loosely—a woman I, for one, would not care to know; and I am no prude; but then, to be sure, Lady Loosely is a grand lady, and can introduce them to the best society, for all that she is a painted harridan, who, but for her title, would be shunned like grim death; whereas pretty little Mrs. Golightly is socially no better than a nobody, with nothing much worse to be laid to her charge than a flirting manner, and a pair

of big black eyes, with which, I confess, she makes too much play. No one has dared even to hint such scandal of the pretty little goose as has been publicly banded about from club to club of my Lady Loosely; but the Mustelas draw away their skirts from the contaminating contact of the one, and live in the pocket of the other.

There were never better friends to me than were, at one time, the Mustelas. That was in my palmy days, before I married and came to grief. I can never forget the kindness they showed me then; the generosity with which they opened their house to me, or the maternal interest Mrs. Mustela used to take in me. They have never been quite cordial to my wife. They say they are disappointed that I did not make a better choice; and resent her want of fortune and plain middle-class extraction. And I know they hinted that I had not behaved quite well to Miss Nora, Mustelas' niece, who lived with them in those days; though I had no more thought of making love to the girl than I had of marrying her maid; and never spoke half-a-dozen words to her that I can remember. When I lost so heavily by the Agra bank, I was severely exercised by my prosperity-loving friends, who lectured me for a whole afternoon on the sinful folly of holding bank shares — that failed. They did not invite me, I remember, for many months after. As I kept my house and did not come to public grief, they saw I was not so hardly hit as they had feared; and by degrees relaxed into their old ways. But when John Luckless turned up again, and I befriended him as usual, and burnt my fingers in putting out his fire, they were again very irate; and when I had to let my

house and go into a smaller one at the extreme limits of St. John's Wood, they wrote to me, expressing a certain kind of Christian sorrow for my misfortunes; but, feeling it a duty they owed themselves and their children, they said, to keep their society pure, they were, therefore, compelled to renounce my acquaintance. My evident want of a high moral standard in associating with such people as the Golightlys, and *that* Mr. Luckless, and my criminal imprudence in speculating beyond my means, had, they confessed it with great reluctance, changed their former good opinion of me; and they were forced to add, with great regret, that I had fallen below their esteem. So that account was closed; and when I met them in the park the next day — they cut me.

Lately my wife's godfather died, and left me, most unexpectedly, the whole of his handsome fortune. I met the Mustelas the week after the news got wind. They came up to me more cordially than ever; and Mrs. Mustela said in her maternal voice — she has many voices — that 'really they had felt my estrangement from them so painfully they must put an end to it, and I must positively go to them the same as ever.' Then they asked after my 'dear wife,' and praised her beauty and amiability as vehemently as Amy Silver-tongue would have done; and so, left me, overwhelmed with their affectionate warmth. I think however, I shall not go to their house in spite of their kindness. You see they adopt one only because of one's circumstances, not because of oneself; and though I am by no means so Utopian as to think we can be independent of material conditions, yet I do not care to be accepted or discarded merely because I am prosperous or

the reverse; and as it was they themselves who made the coolness between us, I think I will let it stand as it is, and not attempt anything like intimacy again.

VI.

JOHN LUCKLESS.

Take him all round, John Luckless is the most unfortunate fellow in the world. Nothing prospers with him, and Fate seems to have set a cross against every one of his undertakings. He is, of all my friends, the most disastrous and the most lovable. He is always coming to grief somehow, and half the time of all his friends is taken up in trying to pull him through his difficulties. Sometimes he has to be bailed out of the lock-up, because he got into a row by defending a poor woman against a brute of a husband—and defending her a little too vigorously; sometimes the brokers have to be bought out, because he must needs put his name to a bit of paper for a friend, to find himself left with the liability attached; but whatever it may be, there is always disaster impending. So his friends have to shore up and stave off, else the whole shaky fabric of poor John's fortunes would fall to the ground, and that which is bad enough now in all conscience, become infinitely worse.

And he has the worst luck of any man I ever knew. Every peccadillo that he has ever committed—things which with other fellows would never have got wind—is known and blazed abroad. It seems as if he lives in a glass house which is the mark for all the stone-throwing of the county. His career is a marvel of misfortune. Everything he touches crumbles under his hand. His shares are bought at a premium,

and sold at discount. He never yet had a situation that he kept longer than two months; and do what you will to set him on his feet, he is sure to come tumbling to the ground, with his head in the dust, before you have done with him. Not always by fault; chiefly by ill-luck. He is born to misfortunes, he says, as some are born to silver spoons; and he cannot escape his doom.

The most disastrous thing about him is that fringe of hungry hangers-on whom he has not the heart to shake off, and who absolutely eat him up. They are either old friends to whom he feels bound by length of acquaintanceship, relations by blood, or connections by marriage, who, while he has a shilling in his purse, are generously willing to accept sixpence. So that to know John Luckless is to be drafted into an army of harpies, who suck one's blood and damage one's repute even more than he himself does. And yet in this very fringe, disastrous as it is, lies the secret of his loveliness, if also the cause of his bane. The most generous fellow in the world, one cannot but admire his unselfishness, even when one deploras its effects: and suffers from them. What can you say to a man, who, with a fine flush on his cheek, tells you, with moist eyes and in a husky voice, that, so long as he has a loaf, his cousin Mary Jane shall have her slice—for can he ever forget her kindness to his poor dear wife when she was supposed to be dying? And how can he turn that old father-in-law of his out of doors now, after having kept him all these years? If you hint to him that Mary Jane is a strong, capable woman, able to earn her own loaf, with butter to it, if she would but shake off her sloth and put her shoulder to the wheel with a will; and that his

wife's father has sons of his own, far better able to support him than is he, John Luckless, you hurt him, and he complains pathetically that you take advantage of his obligations to you, and—well! he did not expect that *you* would have looked at things in this worldly light! From *you* he had expected sympathy, a higher feeling—and a loan. So you put your hand in your pocket for the twentieth time; and for the twentieth time commit an immoral action in the name of virtue. You take from your own and the deserving, that you may support Mary Jane in sloth, relieve old Snail's sons of their obligations, bolster up John himself in a fatal system, and support an army of harpies and a fringe of leeches which it is your duty to discountenance and destroy.

It is almost impossible to do John Luckless any permanent good. No slavish business suits him, for he is a man of a free artistic spirit; and the pity of it is that every business seems to him more slavish than not. Either the head man in the office is a ruffian, or the kind of work is degrading, or some pressing human duty which he would have been a brute and a snob to have neglected for such a base thing as business, took him off one day without leave, and so cost him his place. However it comes about, it is sure to come about somehow, before long; and the upshot of one's trouble in getting him into a valuable situation is an ignominious dismissal for some dereliction of duty committed on high ethical principles.

John Luckless is bitten with the mania of speculation. Long years of patient work, of strict economy, and the judicious investment of margins, which are the methods whereby others provide good days for themselves, are to him mean-spirited drudgery; con-

sequently, he no sooner gets a pound together than he plucks them all on a bright-looking bubble and loses to the last farthing. is as unlucky, too, in his family in everything else. His wife either fails in health, or goes off with a dragoon, or fulfils the alcoholic destiny of women who want 'to and justifies the 'Saturday' in the 'Lancet.' Anyhow, she is help to him. The children, too, of whom there is a goodly tribe, are sickly; and otherwise unsatisfactory. They have more measles and scarlet fever and whooping cough than any one else; and, or two of them are 'afflicted'; John's mantle of misfortune is his heirloom, and has descended to his offspring. Put to school, friendly patrons, they have to come home again before they have been there three months: they cannot bear the work, or the place agrees with them. Given means of one profession, and are sure to develop quite opposite tastes, and either get their intentions cancelled, or, so soon as they are free, render all their previous training of no avail; as, when you John who had been educated a solicitor, took to painting as soon as he was out of his time; Sam, who had been put to college and was promised a little living in Cumberland, 'on the tracks' for the Gold Fields, utilized his classics by anathematizing his bad luck in quartets and cradles in limping hexameters.

One of the unfathomable mysteries connected with the family is how they live at all, pressed as they are in a small house, half big enough for them, and a quarter furnished. And they are slow in moving off. The persistent ill-luck that has always accompanied them has taken all their energy out of them; and other lads would be out in

world doing for themselves, the Luckless boys are hanging about at home, waiting, like Micawber, for something to turn up. At last they thin themselves out, and then you would think, the pressure being lightened, John's sun would shine at last. Not a bit of it. Either his characteristic ill-luck weighs on him more heavily than before, and Fortune is still more cruel than she was, or approaching age has quenched his never too superabundant energy, or probably his children are as unlucky as himself, and so are drains to, not feeders of, his scanty channels. Whatever the cause, the result is invariably the same: John Luckless is still the unresisting victim of a malignant fate; and if you would not see the man starve before your eyes, you must still subsidize him generously, and still bear your share of his burdens for the sake of Christian charity and Auld Lang Syne.

And your share is a large one. For, what with improvidence and ill-luck, generosity and weakness, the kindly follies of the man,

and his damaging virtues, his life is one long series of misfortunes, and by consequence his friendship is a disaster to all who undertake it. I know no man so good, so affectionate, who has done everybody he loves so much harm. To myself he has been a plague-spot from first to last, in means and in repute. The worst social troubles I have ever been in have come to me through sticking to Luckless in some of his catastrophes, whereby I got splashed with the mud with which he had unwittingly covered himself; while as for the money he has cost me—don't let me speak of it! If only it had done good! But the worst of it is, it was just like pouring water on sand; it all sank away, and not even a bit of green-looking weed or lichen sprang up as my reward. And yet I love old John; and nothing shall make me less to him than I have ever been; and between the Mustelas and John—prosperity without heart, and misfortune with love—I choose the latter, and stick to my choice.



THE PICCADILLY PAPERS.

LITERARY NOOKS.

I THINK it is always an interesting point to determine the *habitat* of a great writer, to compare the writings with the surroundings, to see how the author has reproduced the scenery and how the scenery has affected the writer. I have even met with distinguished Germans, who have said that, given the external circumstances that act upon a man, you may tell his cast of mind and character. This is a good example of the German passion for theorizing, building up an immense superstructure upon a slender basis. We like to think of our writers of pleasant fiction writing under pleasant circumstances. So Dickens wrote in his Swiss *chalet*, and Lord Lytton in the summer-house on the margin of his lake. We can very well imagine how Thackeray's notes were made, if not written out; in lodgings, in cabs, in boarding-houses, in his bed-room after heavy dinner parties, in the writing-rooms of clubs, and so on. The late Mr. Lever, whose loss we all sincerely deplore, left the track of his travels on all his writings. As an Irish surgeon he gave us rollicking Irish stories, and when he went abroad he took his readers abroad with him. His political friends sent him to Spezzia and Trieste, much as Shiel was sent to Florence, or Mr. Hannay to Barcelona. Then he gave us the scenery of Northern Italy and of the shores of the Adriatic. So, too, Mr. Trollope utilised all his travels for the Post-office in that long series of stories, which, on

the whole, have quite a cosmopolitan character. Poor was moving about London a few months ago as blithely fresh looking as ever, though now know that for him life and happiness were both lost. He had lost his wife, and doctors had told him he was hopelessly diseased. From that time to last how bright and boyish his nature, and how he loved to delineate boyish nature! what a patriotic nature was from first to last trying to make Ireland understood, and to render her such service as a novelist might render.

The public, doubtless, took a great interest in Mr. Tenison. A friend of mine was once sent to a country inn where the man was also putting up. My friend reclined in an arbour and was more surprised than gratified by observing that various seditious peeps were taken of him by the people of the place. Compliments were freely passed on his magnificent brow, his intellectual eyes, and his wildly flowing hair. My friend was doubtless gratified that his personal qualifications were so liberally appreciated, but the feeling must have been modified on learning that such compliments were intended for him but for the present. I have frequently 'tracked' by accident upon Tennyson in pretty scenery. I find that he always likes to get to the point. He was driven to the tourists from his pretty

near Freshwater; and I remorsefully recollect that, when I had the Tennysonian fever in my youth, I persuaded the gardener to give us some of his flowers, but at the time he was far away in Portugal. And the public follow him to his new home, which I will not indicate. Once I saw an advertisement in the second column of the 'Times,' assuring some imperfectly-educated gentleman that Wordsworth really did live and die at Rydal Mount. And of all pleasant nooks I know there is none lovelier than that of Rydal, between the mountains and the lake. Wordsworth used to wonder what would become of Rydal after his time, and it is perhaps a sad thought that, apparently to the inevitable advertisement all pretty poetic retreats must come at last. There was a study at Rydal, but Wordsworth studied abroad, and on him, if on any, the outward forms of nature left a distinct impress. I remember once forging a long day's work in walking from Keswick to Derwentwater, over mountain and by lake, and at last I came in the solemn twilight to that exquisite retreat, covered with roses, jessamine, and myrtle, and realized at last what was meant by the familiar expression of the *genius loci*.

But let us come back to Mr. Tennyson. Of his early home in Lincolnshire, with its vast dome of illimitable sky, he has not said much. Of the old parsonage he says,

'The three elms, the poplars four,
That stand before my father's door.'

The other day I went to Clevedon, to which belongs the 'In Memoriam' scenery. Clevedon is now a fashionable and very pretty little watering-place, on 'that broad water of the West,' as Mr. Tennyson calls the Bristol Channel.

I am glad that the modern watering-place has been built away from the old headland where the primitive village reposes, little changed by the lapse of time. Clevedon has an earlier literary association with Coleridge, who made his first home here with his young wife. He loved, and praised, and poetized that home, albeit it was humble enough. How touching are his farewell lines, beginning

'Low was our pretty cot. Our tallest
rose.'

It is now divided into two labourers' cottages. That lake trio, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Southey, have all their local associations. Close to Coleridge's cottage is Clevedon Court, Sir Arthur Hallam Elton's place. Clevedon is certainly rich in its associations of Coleridge, Tennyson, and the Hallams. In the church are those affecting series of monuments to the members of the Hallam family. First comes Arthur's monument, and the poet tells how the letters slowly glimmer in the moonlight, of its touching inscription; then another mural tablet to the memory of a beloved sister, then another to a second gifted brother, then one to the mother, and, lastly, a few lines to the elder Hallam. The historian's real epitaph is in St. Paul's Cathedral, evidently written either by Dean Milman or Lord Macaulay. The epitaphs breathe one language of the parents' joy in the possession, though so brief, of such children, and a sure trust in a happy meeting again. The interments were intramural, and the actual spots are not indicated. The lines—

'And from thy ashes shall be made
The violet of thy native land,'

lose their force, and though the lines are true in sense and feeling:—

'The Danube to the Severn gave
The darkened heart that ceased to
beat.'

yet one is at a loss to see the exact force of the introduction of the Wye, miles away on the opposite shore; you can hardly observe the outlet beneath the woods. To Clevedon, doubtless, belongs the scenery of the poem:

'Break, break, break
On thy cold grey crags, O Sea.'

There is the little bay retreating from the channel just below the church, where the fisherman's boy sits and sings in his boat; but 'the haven under the hill' is not so clear, and I imagine that the roadstead below Penarth is indicated, near Cardiff.

Specially interesting are the spots where great designs are commenced or finished. We recollect how Gibbon designed his great work amid the ruins of the Coliseum, and how he took his moonlight walk when he had finished it in his garden at Lausanne. I tried hard at the Hotel Gibbon to realize that famous scene, but an hotel does not easily recall a library. Poor Gibbon! I think of his melancholy sentence: 'Two causes, the failure of hope and the abbreviation of tears, always tinge with a browner shade the evening of life.' It is not always, however, that picturesque scenes are attached to famous moments. I know of two great modern poets who were once taking a walk amid splendid scenery. As they gained the brow of a hill, below which an interminable prospect stretched out, one of them exclaimed, 'It was here, my friend, that the idea of my great poem first occurred to my mind. Where were you when the thought of your epic was first suggested to you?' 'I was under a lamp-post waiting for my sweetheart,' was the somewhat prosaic reply. I imagine that

many a great literary design has been developed among the lamp-posts in the London streets. That library of the British Museum is fertile in many memories. Macaulay had a room there to study. He came up one day in severe weather, being a bronchial subject, and met an astonished friend, who packed him back in a cab. He said he had not come from Holly House in his carriage, to spare the coachman and horses—a lamentable instance of the tyranny in which men are held by coachmen and horses. But London is truly haunted London for those who know the shadows.

The little Norman Isle of Jersey has memories—strangely parallel memories—after the lapse of two centuries. Here came Edward Hyde, Lord Chancellor, Chancellor of England, Chancellor of Human Nature, in want, neglect, and, I am afraid, some natural bad temper, that perverted his political views, to write his 'History of the Great Rebellion.' I have examined his manuscripts at the Bodleian, written in a beautiful Italian hand, and so closely, that one page of manuscript would include many of Mr. Combe's type. Two centuries later—and yet those days to me always seem so near—Victor Hugo came here, a literary exile, playing a narrower part in politics, and a larger one over the imagination. Victor Hugo has a natural affinity, of the widest kind, for human nature, especially Gallic nature. Clarendon affects only its loftier types. He is picturesque, he is even Dantesque. Strafford wears his imperial aspect, Falkland his melancholy smile. We see the frown on the corrugated brow of the Protector, and the laughter on the harsh lineaments of the younger Charles.

Then there are some spots of learned and religious retreat, which

have a peculiar charm, as in the ancient cloisters and embowered shades of our Universities. What Oxonian has not lingered in the long avenue that takes its name from Addison? In the Broad Walk one chiefly thinks of Locke, perhaps the greatest name that Oxford has produced, and for centuries accepted on the Continent as the only exponent of English philosophy. I suppose the Lime Avenue at Trinity College and the Broad Walk at Christ Church might be covered with the compositions dedicated to them. I am fond of that silent pictured solitude, the library of Christ Church; and there, I believe, the present Dean used to go and work, at six o'clock in the morning, at the mighty *Lexicon* which he was basing upon Passow. I know of another great scholar who used to sit cheerily at his window working away at a great Dictionary, which his University had engaged him to compile. Cambridge, on the whole, is much richer in literary memories than Oxford. I love especially to think of the Lady Margaret's ancient foundation of Christ's College, with the bowling green, the deep swimming-pool, and Milton's mulberry tree. There the grave English Platonists, such as Cudworth, and More, used to walk and meditate. The old tree is propped and stayed, and an offshoot is prosperously flourishing. Was it under this very tree that the Italian lady found Milton sleeping, and gave him the kiss which is said to have haunted him ever after? The Scottish Universities are not equally fruitful in memorials, for the collegiates' buildings, as in Germany, were reserved for the Professors, and not for the carrying out of the mediæval college system. Yet, though, Glasgow University has passed away to a new and finer

site. One regrets these old grounds where Waverley's duel with his false cousin was interrupted by Rob Roy, and where the red-gowned students used to flit at earliest dawn through the lamp-lit courts. When I pass by the buildings of the University of Edinburgh I recall the case of Dugald Stewart and the Literary Society that once really made Edinburgh a modern Athens.

Then there is that old-fashioned parsonage at Bemerton, with its grounds sloping down the river, where Master George Herbert lived, whom Mr. Leighton has painted as a fisherman—on what authority I am not aware, except the tempting contiguity to the stream. Herbert had been Public Orator at Cambridge, and had aspired to be Secretary of State, for he had great friends, and, in especial, he knew Lord Bacon, whose new philosophy he had probably helped to Latinize. My own notion is, that in this sweet retreat, within hearing of the Salisbury chimes, he simply starved himself to death. For Herbert translated the work of Cornaro, the Venetian, who lived on a minute quantity of food, which was weighed out daily, and Herbert probably not only expounded the method, but practised it, which was unsuitable both to our climate and his own constitution. Going into the new church, I saw sundry books, 'presented by George Herbert,' a son of the late Lord Herbert of Lea, and brother to our new young author, the Earl of Pembroke. The old tiny church is not used, but is too precious to be pulled down, herein resembling that equally tiny church of Bonchurch, with its recollections of such men as Sterling and Adams. A very similar set of associations cluster around Hursley. What a beautiful, calm, idyllic life is that por-

trayed by Miss Yonge, of Keble. We seem to go into the woodlands and the pastures, and then to pass into the silent companionship of the library, and except that the ecclesiastical skies are troubled, or some villager threatens to go wrong, there seems hardly a crumpled rose-leaf to disturb that lettered and serene existence. Such a life is possible for very few men, is good for very few. Some of us would not enjoy it, most of us would be incapable of enjoying it. It is only through a deal of hard fighting that we can attain to anything like that peace. Once I went down to Stoke Pogis to realize the 'Elegy.' It was the evening hour; the owl, the ivy, the nearer and distant sounds were all there, as Grey described them. There has been some controversy as to the village churchyard, but I think a visit to Stoke Pogis would almost serve to settle the question. Once I investigated Horton very carefully, induced to do so by Mr. Mosson's noble work. In the Home Park, at Windsor, Herne's oak is blown down and its remains converted into *souvenirs*, but I satisfied myself at Datchet of the spot where Falstaff was nearly smothered, of the scene where Rochester describes the second Charles fishing, and of the islet where Savile brought Izaak Walton to fish, and, doubtless, showed him his superb edition of 'St. Chrysostom.' In the forest you recall the youthful muse of Pope; and if you beat about suburban scenery, go to Chiswick, to Binfield. Indeed, if you will take a boat from Richmond Bridge to where Teddington Lock severs the sweet from the brackish tidal water, you will pass through lovely scenery, crowded with literary associations. All the brilliant company in London come down to look at Mr. Pope's Grotto, except my Lady Mary Wortley

Montagu, who has quarrelled with him and stands aloof; and Johnson visits Owen Cambridge close to the bridge; and a stately company sweep up the avenue of my Lord Dysart's house at Ham; and Thomson skips heated into his boat to catch that fatal cold; and Horace Walpole takes the water from Strawberry Hill to see his much-loved Miss Burnies in their own mimic little castle near the Duke of Buccleuch's villa. Lower down the river, where you go to see our great aquatic races, think not only of the brilliant festivities of those gardens, but of that plain chamber in the Duke of Devonshire's villa, where two great Premiers, Fox and Canning, breathed and slept their last.

I have not exhausted them, but I do not claim much for my *souvenirs*. Probably many of my readers have much more ample. Only I may insist that the habit of having such *souvenirs* is not unuseful. It gives a zest to the visiting of famous localities, if we are able to associate them with literary memories. It helps to take away from authorship its unreal, abstract character; the human interest is heightened; we grow into permanent companionship with great men as we track them in their haunts and resting-places, in their down-sitting and uprising. Amid all that is transitory and uncertain, we see the eternal forms of nature amid which they moved. It is much to study great works in a spirit of genuine criticism, more, perhaps, to study them in a spirit of genuine sympathy. And, after all, though criticism may destroy sympathy, sympathy is always helpful, almost essential, to a sound and healthy criticism.

TWO NEW WORKS IN HISTORY.

Mr. Freeman sees land at last. His fourth volume of the 'History

of the Norman Conquest' brings us to the death of the Conqueror, and his next and last volume will examine into 'Domesday Book,' and trace the consequences of the Conquest to the time of Edward I. Mr. Freeman is a very busy man. He seems to us mentally to recall Cowley's lines—

'What shall I do to be for ever known,
And make the age to come my own.'

He has taken up many things, and has laid them down, or at least suspended them. He has intermeddled with politics; he has fought country squires on the hunting question; he has a great love of ecclesiastical matters; he is a great archæologist, and has told anew his stories of the cathedrals of Llandaff and St. David's; he has written several little books; and an innumerable number of serial articles; he has commenced an immense work on the 'History of Federal Government;' and he has actually nearly completed a really good work on the 'History of the Norman Conquest.*' And yet, though Mr. Freeman has tried so many lines of literary life, he is by no means Goethe's 'many-sided man.' His is a peculiar order of mind that is only at home in a particular set of studies. He is an archæologist and an historian. In his own line he is probably cultivated to the highest attainable point of cultivation. His industry is intense, and we can say for him, what we really cannot say for many historians, that his love of truth and accuracy is ever intense. But he has his angles and asperities. He is dogmatic and immensely self-satisfied. He has a tone that is intolerant and rude to those who

are not well posted up in history, and might make errors in dates and places. But, all affectation aside, we may be quite sure that omniscience belongs to none of us. We suspect that a scientific man might subject Mr. Freeman to a searching and very disagreeable cross-examination. We imagine that Mr. Freeman would not come out of it very well. There is a want of roundness about him, an absence of the modern scientific spirit. We believe that Mr. Freeman would break down entirely in certain subjects, but the man who broke him down would have no right to raise a howl of triumph. Mr. Freeman is a master of his own craft, the literary craft. But whether he is really a great historian is a different matter. He has a fondness for anise and cummin which is not propitious. He is the very man to explain the Saxon Chronicle or decipher the Bayeux tapestry. He will wrangle through page after page on trifling matters of names and lands which have not the slightest importance or bearing on the general subject. He will, with wearisome iteration, bring out point after point, insisting that each point is the most important of all. He is rhetorical, even eloquent, but his history is by no means a work of art. Tennyson speaks of his brother-in-law, Professor Lushington, as

'Gentle, wearing all that weight
Of learning lightly as a flower.'

The very converse to that of Mr. Freeman. He is not particularly gentle, and his learning absolutely crushes him. He cannot afford to part with the least bit of it. He thinks that all his chippings are gold-dust; an opinion in which we find ourselves quite unable to coincide.

We cannot say that the present volume strikes us as giving any

* 'The History of the Norman Conquest of England.' By E. A. Freeman, M.A. Vol. IV. Oxford: at the Clarendon Press.

very important additions to the stock of historical knowledge. Mr. Freeman traces the gradual steps by which William becomes a tyrant. He recounts the dark crimes of the harrying of Northumberland, the judicial murder of Waltheof, the creation of the New Forest. Then we see the Nemesis that haunted the later years of William's reign; and as we see the pettiness and vulgar crimes with which they are marked, we are tempted to ask whether William ever was the very great man whom Mr. Freeman represents him to have been. But, after plodding through this immense volume, we own we should have liked to have had the results in a terser way, and are not quite sure whether it was worth while to go through so much to learn so little.

The last matter on which Montalembert was engaged was the perusal of Baron Hübner's *Sixtus the Fifth*;* and we believe the last letter he wrote was to congratulate the author. We are glad to welcome a capital translation of it by Mr. Jerningham, which seems spirited and accurate. It is high time that Gregorio Leti's imaginative work—let us phrase it mildly—should be superseded. Robertson, who wrote the history of a King of Spain and Emperor of Germany without knowing anything about Spanish or German, while quoting a cloud of authorities, was pretty well content to follow Gregorio Leti. We think Baron Hübner is at times very hard on Leti, to whose marvellous stories we must confess an ancient kindness. His account of the severities of Sixtus is hardly over-

charged. The Pope who, before his coronation, put four brothers to death simply for carrying arms into the city with an innocent purpose, who followed it up with the execution of a venerable nobleman for a trivial offence, was cruel and unjust, to whatever degree the State may have required a Reformation. We miss the story of Sixtus beheading the young man who stole a kiss from the Roman lady, and also of sending the camels loaded with poisoned provisions among the banditti, but we have the tragic and authentic story of Vittoria Accoramboni. Yet the Pontiff wept when he heard of the fate of Mary of Scotland. Yet his tears did not prevent him from expressing the warmest admiration for Queen Elizabeth: and on her part Elizabeth used to say that the Pope was the only prince in Europe worthy of her hand. His great career in respect to his policy in Italy, more especially as affecting the banditti; his attitude towards the Reformation and the Catholic reaction; his great works in Rome, more especially in the Obelisk and the bringing of water into the city; his foreign policy and the leagues, are all set forth clearly and fully. The Baron has ransacked the State archives of the Vatican, Simancas, Venice, Paris, Vienna, and Florence, and has thrown a flood of light upon the period. The work strikes us as one of the most valuable that has been produced within recent years, valuable alike for its method and result, for its method in its scientific examination of the authorities, and its results in illustrating a momentous period and a remarkable man who, in his way, was something like Haroun Alraschid.

F. ARNOLD.

* 'The Life and Times of Sixtus the Fifth.' By Baron Hübner. Translated by Hubert E. A. Jerningham. Longmans.

LONDON SOCIETY.

AUGUST, 1872.

A SIMPLETON.

A Story of the Day.

BY CHARLES READE.

[At the Author's particular request this story is not illustrated.]

CHAPTER I.

A YOUNG lady sat pricking a framed canvas, in the drawing-room of Kent Villa, a mile from Gravesend; she was making, at a cost of time and tinted wool, a chair-cover, admirably unfit to be sat upon—except by some peevish artist, bent on obliterating discordant colours. To do her justice, her mind was not in her work; for she rustled softly with restlessness as she sat, and she rose three times in twenty minutes, and went to the window. Thence she looked down, over a trim, flowery lawn, and long, sloping meadows, on to the silver Thames, alive with steamboats ploughing, white sails bellying, and great ships carrying to and fro the treasures of the globe. From this fair landscape, and epitome of commerce, she retired each time with listless disdain; she was waiting for somebody.

Yet she was one of those whom few men care to keep waiting. Rosa Lusignan was a dark, but dazzling beauty, with coal-black hair, and glorious dark eyes, that seemed to beam with soul all day long; her eyebrows black, straightish, and rather thick, would have

been majestic, and too severe, had the other features followed suit; but her black brows were succeeded by long silky lashes, a sweet oval face, two pouting lips studded with ivory, and an exquisite chin, as feeble as any man could desire in the partner of his bosom. Person—straight, elastic, and rather tall. Mind—nineteen. Accomplishments—numerous; a poor French scholar, a worse German, a worst English, an admirable dancer, an inaccurate musician, a good rider, a bad draughtswoman, a bad hair-dresser, at the mercy of her maid; a hot theologian, knowing nothing, a sorry accountant, no housekeeper, no sempstress, a fair embroidress, a capital geographer, and no cook.

Collectively, viz., mind and body, the girl we kneel to.

This ornamental member of society now glanced at the clock once more, and then glided to the window for the fourth time. She peeped at the side a good while, with superfluous slyness, or shyness, and presently she drew back, blushing crimson; then she peeped again, still more furtively, then retired softly to her frame, and,

for the first time, set to work in earnest; as she plied her harpoon, smiling now, the large and vivid blush, that had suffused her face and throat, turned from carnation to rose, and melted away slowly, but perceptibly, and ever so sweetly; and somebody knocked at the street door.

The blow seemed to drive her deeper into her work. She leaned over it, graceful as a willow, and so absorbed, she could not even see the door of the room open, and Doctor Staines come in.

All the better: her not perceiving that slight addition to her furniture, gives me a moment to describe him.

A young man, five feet eleven inches high, very square shouldered, and deep chested, but so symmetrical, and light in his movements, that his size hardly struck one at first. He was smooth shaved, all but a short, thick, auburn whisker; his hair was brown. His features no more than comely: the brow full, the eyes wide apart, and deep-seated, the lips rather thin, but expressive, the chin solid and square. It was a face of power, and capable of harshness; but leavened by an eye of unusual colour, between hazel and grey, and wonderfully tender. In complexion, he could not compare with Rosa; his cheek was clear, but pale; for few young men had studied night and day so constantly. Though but twenty-eight years of age, he was literally a learned physician; deep in hospital practice; deep in books; especially deep in German science, too often neglected, or skimmed, by English physicians. He had delivered a course of lectures at a learned university with general applause.

As my reader has divined, Rosa was preparing the comedy of a cool reception; but, looking up,

she saw his pale cheek tinted with a lover's beautiful joy at the bare sight of her, and his soft eye so divine with love, that she had not the heart to chill him. She gave him her hand kindly, and smiled brightly on him instead of remonstrating. She lost nothing by it, for the very first thing he did was to excuse himself eagerly. 'I am behind time: the fact is, just as I was mounting my horse, a poor man came to the gate to consult me. He had a terrible disorder I have sometimes succeeded in arresting—I attack the cause instead of the symptoms, which is the old practice—and so that detained me. You forgive me?'

'Of course. Poor man!—only you said you wanted to see papa, and he always goes out at two.'

When she had been betrayed into saying this, she drew in suddenly, and blushed with a pretty consciousness.

'Then don't let me lose another minute,' said the lover. 'Have you prepared him for—for—what I am going to have the audacity to say?'

Rosa answered, with some hesitation, 'I *must* have—a little. When I refused Colonel Bright—you need not devour my hand quite—he is forty.'

Her sentence ended, and away went the original topic, and grammatical sequence along with it. Christopher Staines recaptured them both. 'Yes, dear, when you refused Colonel Bright—'

'Well, papa was astonished; for everybody says the Colonel is a most eligible match. Don't you hate that expression? I do. Eligible!'

Christopher made due haste, and recaptured her. 'Yes, love, your papa said——?'

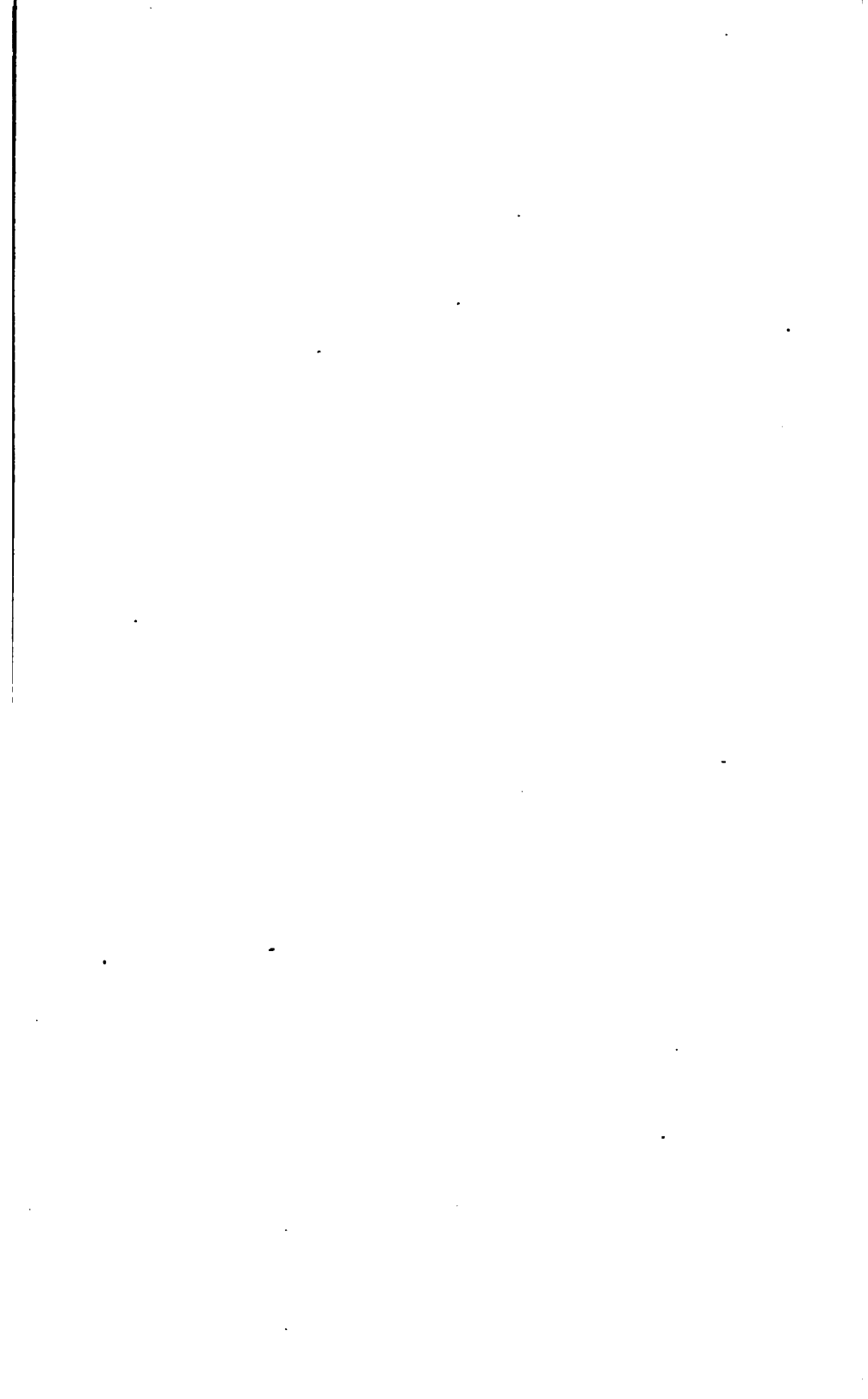
'I don't think I will tell you, He asked me was there anybody else; and of course I said "No."'



Drawn by H. Johnson.]

"GOING TO CUT FLOWERS."

(Frontispiece.



'Oh!

'Oh, that is nothing; I had not time to make up my mind to tell the truth. I was taken by surprise; and you know one's first impulse is to fib—about *that*.'

'But did you really deceive him?'

'No. I blushed; and he caught me; so he said, "Come, now, there was."'

'And you said, "Yes, there is," like a brave girl as you are.'

'What? plump like that? No, I was frightened out of my wits, like a brave girl as I am not, and said I should never marry any one he could disapprove; and then—oh, then I believe I began to cry. Christopher, I'll tell you something; I find people leave off teasing you when you cry; gentlemen, I mean. Ladies go on all the more. So then dear papa kissed me, and told me I must not be imprudent, and throw myself away, that was all; and I promised him I never would. I said he would be sure to approve my choice; and he said he hoped so. And so he will.'

Dr. Staines looked thoughtful, and said he hoped so too. 'But, now it comes to the point of asking him for such a treasure, I feel my deficiencies.'

'Why, what deficiencies? You are young, and handsome, and good, and ever so much cleverer than other people. You have only to ask for me, and insist on having me. Come, dear, go and get it over.' She added, mighty coolly, 'There is nothing so *dreadful* as suspense.'

'I'll go this minute,' said he, and took a step towards the door; but he turned, and in a moment was at her knees. He took both her hands in his, and pressed them to his beating bosom, while his beautiful eyes poured love into hers point blank. 'May I tell

him you love me? Oh, I know you cannot love me as I love you; but I may say you love me a little, may I not? that will go farther with him than anything else. May I, Rosa, may I?—a little?'

His passion mastered her. She drooped her head sweetly on his shoulder, and murmured, 'You know you may, my own. Who would not love you?'

He parted lingeringly from her, then marched away, bold with love and hope, to demand her hand in marriage.

Rosa leaned back in her chair, and quivered a little with new emotions. Christopher was right; she was not capable of loving like him; but still the actual contact of so strong a passion made her woman's nature vibrate. A dewy tear hung on the fringes of her long lashes, and she leaned back in her chair, and fluttered awhile.

That emotion, almost new to her, soon yielded, in her girlish mind, to a complacent languor; and that, in its turn, to a soft reverie. So she was going to be married! To be mistress of a house, settle in London; (*that* she had quite determined long ago); be able to go out into the streets all alone, to shop, or visit; have a gentleman all her own, whom she could put her finger on any moment, and make him take her about, even to the opera and the theatre; to give dinner-parties her own self, and even a little ball once in a way; to buy whatever dresses she thought proper, instead of being crippled by an allowance; have the legal right of speaking first in society, even to gentlemen rich in ideas but bad starters, instead of sitting mum-chance and mockmodest; to be Mistress, instead of Miss—con-temptible title; to, be a woman,

instead of a girl: and all this rational liberty, domestic power, and social dignity, were to be obtained by merely wedding a dear fellow, who loved her, and was so nice: and the bright career to be ushered in with several delights, each of them dear to a girl's very soul; presents from all her friends; as many beautiful new dresses as if she was changing her body or her hemisphere, instead of her name; *éclat*; going to church, which is a good English girl's theatre of display and temple of vanity, and there tasting delightful publicity and whispered admiration, in a heavenly long veil, which she could not wear even once if she remained single.

This bright variegated picture of holy wedlock, and its essential features, as revealed to young ladies by feminine tradition, though not enumerated in the Book of Common Prayer composed by males, so entranced her, that time flew by unheeded, and Christopher Staines came back from her father. His step was heavy; he looked pale, and deeply distressed; then stood like a statue, and did not come close to her, but cast a piteous look, and gasped out one word, that seemed almost to choke him—'REFUSED!'

Miss Lusignan rose from her chair, and looked almost wildly at him with her great eyes. 'Refused?' said she, faintly.

'Yes,' said he, sadly. 'Your father is a man of business; and he took a mere business view of our love: he asked me directly what provision I could make for his daughter and her children. Well, I told him I had three thousand pounds in the Funds, and a good profession; and then I said I had youth, health, and love, boundless love, the love that

can do, or suffer, the love that can conquer the world.'

'Dear Christopher! And what *could* he say to all that?'

'He ignored it entirely. There, I'll give you his very words. He said, "In that case, Dr. Staines, the simple question is, what does your profession bring you in per annum?"'

'Oh!—There—I always hated arithmetic, and now I abominate it.'

'Then I was obliged to confess I had scarcely received a hundred pounds in fees this year; but I told him the reason; this is such a small district, and all the ground occupied. London, I said, was my sphere.'

'And so it is,' said Rosa, eagerly; for this jumped with her own little designs. 'Genius is wasted in the country. Besides, whenever anybody worth curing is ill down here, they always send to London for a doctor.'

'I told him so, dearest,' said the lover. 'But he answered me directly, then I must set up in London, and, as soon as my books showed an income to keep a wife, and servants, and children, and insure my life for five thousand pounds—'

'Oh, that is so like papa. He is director of an insurance company, so all the world must insure their lives.'

'No, dear, he was quite right there: professional incomes are most precarious. Death spares neither young nor old, neither warm hearts nor cold. I should be no true physician if I could not see my own mortality.' He hung his head and pondered a moment, then went on, sadly, 'It all comes to this—until I have a professional income of eight hundred a year at least, he will not hear of our marrying; and the cruel thing is he will not even

consent to an engagement. But,' said the rejected, with a look of sad anxiety, 'You will wait for me without that, dear Rosa?'

She could give him that comfort, and she gave it him with loving earnestness. 'Of course I will; and it shall not be very long. Whilst you are making your fortune, to please papa, I will keep fretting, and pouting, and crying, till he sends for you.'

'Bless you, dearest. Stop! not to make yourself ill! not for all the world.' There spoke the lover and the physician.

He came, all gratitude, to her side, and they sat, hand in hand, comforting each other: indeed parting was such sweet sorrow that they sat, handed, and very close to one another, till Mr. Lusignan, who thought five minutes quite enough for rational beings to take leave in, walked into the room and surprised them. At sight of his grey head and iron-grey eyebrows, Christopher Staines started up and looked confused; he thought some apology necessary, so he faltered out, 'Forgive me, sir; it is a bitter parting to me, you may be sure.'

Rosa's bosom heaved at these simple words. She flew to her father, and cried, 'Oh, papa! papa! you were never cruel before:' and hid her burning face on his shoulder; and then burst out crying, partly for Christopher, partly because she was now ashamed of herself for having taken a young man's part so openly.

Mr. Lusignan looked sadly discomposed at this outburst: she had taken him by his weak point; he told her so. 'Now, Rosa,' said he, rather peevishly, 'you know I hate a noise.'

Rosa had actually forgotten that trait for a single moment; but, being reminded of it, she reduced

her sobs in the prettiest way, not to offend a tender parent who could not bear noise. Under this homely term, you must know, he included all scenes, disturbances, rumpuses, passions; and expected all men, women, and things, in Kent villa, to go smoothly; or go elsewhere.

'Come, young people,' said he, 'don't make a disturbance. Where's the grievance? Have I said he shall never marry you? Have I forbidden him to correspond? or even to call, say twice a year. All I say is, no marriage, nor contract of marriage, until there is an income.' Then he turned to Christopher. 'Now if you can't make an income without her, how could you make one with her, weighed down by the load of expenses a wife entails? I know her better than you do. She is a good girl, but rather luxurious and self-indulgent. She is not cut out for a poor man's wife. And pray don't go and fancy that nobody loves my child but you. Mine is not so hot as yours, of course; but believe me, sir, it is less selfish. You would expose her to poverty and misery; but I say no; it is my duty to protect her from all chance of them; and, in doing it, I am as much your friend as hers, if you could but see it. Come, Dr. Staines, be a man, and see the world as it is. I have told you how to earn my daughter's hand and my esteem: you must gain both, or neither.'

Dr. Staines was never quite deaf to reason: he now put his hand to his brow and said, with a sort of wonder and pitiful dismay, 'My love for Rosa selfish! Sir, your words are bitter and hard.' Then, after a struggle, and with rare and touching candour, 'Ay, but so are bark and steel; yet they are good medicines.' Then with a great glow in his heart and

tears in his eyes, 'My darling shall not be a poor man's wife, she who would adorn a coronet, ay, or a crown. Good-bye, Rosa, for the present.' He darted to her, and kissed her hand with all his soul. 'Oh, the sacrifice of leaving you,' he faltered; 'the very world is dark to me without you. Ah well, I must earn the right to come again.' He summoned all his manhood, and marched to the door. There he seemed to turn calmer all of a sudden, and said firmly, yet humbly, 'I'll try and show you, sir, what love can do.'

'And I'll show you what love can suffer,' said Rosa, folding her beautiful arms superbly.

It was not in her to have shot such a bolt, except in imitation; yet how promptly the mimic thunder came, and how grand the beauty looked, with her dark brows, and flashing eyes, and folded arms! much grander and more inspired than poor Staines, who had only furnished the idea.

But between these two figures swelling with emotion, the representative of common sense, Lusignan père, stood cool and impassive; he shrugged his shoulders, and looked on both lovers as a couple of ranting novices he was saving from each other and almshouses.

For all that, when the lover had torn himself away, papa's composure was suddenly disturbed by a misgiving. He stepped hastily to the stairhead, and gave it vent. 'Doctor Staines,' said he, in a loud whisper (Staines was half way down the stairs: he stopped). 'I trust to you, as a gentleman, not to mention this; it will never transpire here. Whatever we do—no noise!'

CHAPTER II.

Rosa Lusignan set herself pining as she had promised; and she did it discreetly for so young a person; she was never peevish, but always sad and listless. By this means she did not anger her parent, but only made him feel she was unhappy, and the house she had hitherto brightened exceeding dismal.

By degrees this noiseless melancholy undermined the old gentleman, and he well-nigh tottered.

But one day, calling suddenly on a neighbour with six daughters, he heard peals of laughter, and found Rosa taking her full share of the senseless mirth. She pulled up short at sight of him and coloured high; but it was too late; for he launched a knowing look at her on the spot, and muttered something about seven foolish virgins.

He took the first opportunity when they were alone, and told her he was glad to find she was only dismal at home.

But Rosa had prepared for him. 'One can be loud without being gay at heart,' said she, with a lofty, languid air. 'I have not forgotten your last words to *him*. We were to hide our broken hearts from the world. I try to obey you, dear papa; but, if I had my way, I would never go into the world at all; I have but one desire now; to end my days in a convent.'

'Please begin them first. A convent! Why you'd turn it out of window. You are no more fit to be a nun than—a pauper.'

Not having foreseen this facer, Rosa had nothing ready; so she received it with a sad, submissive, helpless sigh; as who should say, 'Hit me, papa, I have no friend now.' So then he was sorry he had been so clever; and indeed

there is one provoking thing about 'a woman's weakness'—it is invincible.

The next minute what should come but a long letter from Dr. Staines, detailing his endeavours to purchase a practice in London, and his ill-success. The letter spoke the language of love and hope; but the facts were discouraging; and indeed a touching sadness pierced through the veil of the brave words.

Rosa read it again and again, and cried over it before her father, to encourage him in his heartless behaviour.

About ten days after this something occurred that altered her mood.

She became grave and thoughtful, but no longer lugubrious. She seemed desirous to atone to her father for having disturbed his cheerfulness. She smiled affectionately on him, and often sat on a stool at his knee, and glided her hand into his.

He was not a little pleased, and said to himself, 'She is coming round to common sense.'

Now, on the contrary, she was farther from it than ever.

At last he got the clue. One afternoon he met Mr. Wyman coming out of the villa. Mr. Wyman was the consulting surgeon of that part.

'What? any body ill?' said Mr. Lusignan: 'one of the servants?'

'No; it is Miss Lusignan.'

'Why, what is the matter with her?'

Wyman hesitated. 'Oh, nothing very alarming. Would you mind asking her?'

'Why?'

'The fact is, she requested me not to tell you; made me promise.'

'And I insist upon your telling me.'

'And I think you are quite right, sir, as her father. Well, she is troubled with a little spitting of blood.'

Mr. Lusignan turned pale. 'My child! spitting of blood! God forbid.'

'Oh, do not alarm yourself. It is nothing serious.'

'Don't tell me,' said the father. 'It is always serious. And she kept this from me!'

Masking his agitation for the time, he inquired how often it had occurred, this grave symptom.

'Three or four times this last month. But I may as well tell you at once I have examined her carefully, and I do not think it is from the lungs.'

'From the throat, then?'

'No, from the liver. Everything points to that organ as the seat of derangement: not that there is any lesion; only a tendency to congestion. I am treating her accordingly, and have no doubt of the result.'

'Who is the ablest physician hereabouts?' asked Lusignan, abruptly.

'Dr. Snell, I think.'

'Give me his address.'

'I'll write to him, if you like, and appoint a consultation.' He added, with vast but rather sudden alacrity, 'It will be a great satisfaction to my own mind.'

'Then send to him, if you please, and let him be here to-morrow morning; if not, I shall take her to London for advice at once.'

'On this understanding they parted, and Lusignan went at once to his daughter. 'Oh, my child!' said he, deeply distressed, 'how could you hide this from me?'

'Hide what, papa?' said the

girl, looking the picture of unconsciousness.

'That you have been spitting blood.'

'Who told you that?' said she, sharply.

'Wyman; he is attending you.'

Rosa coloured with anger. 'Chatterbox! He promised me faithfully not to.'

'But why, in Heaven's name? What! would you trust this terrible thing to a stranger, and hide it from your poor father?'

'Yes,' replied Rosa, quietly.

The old man would not scold her now: he only said, sadly, 'I see how it is: because I will not let you [marry poverty, you think I do not love you.' And he sighed.

'Oh, papa! the idea!' said Rosa. 'Of course I know you love me. It was not that, you dear, darling, foolish papa. There, if you must know, it was because I did not want you to be distressed. I thought I might get better with a little physic; and, if not, why then I thought, "Papa is an old man; la! I dare say I shall last his time;" and so, why should I poison your latter days with worrying about me?'

Mr. Lusignan stared at her, and his lip quivered; but he thought the trait hardly consistent with her superficial character. He could not help saying, half sadly, half bitterly, 'Well, but of course you have told Dr. Staines.'

Rosa opened her beautiful eyes, like two suns. 'Of course I have done nothing of the sort. He has enough to trouble him, without that. Poor fellow! there he is, worrying and striving to make his fortune, and gain your esteem—"they go together," you know; you told him so. (Young cats will scratch when least expected.) And for me to go and tell him I am in danger! Why, he would go wild;

he would think of nothing but me and my health; he would never make his fortune: and so then, even when I am gone, he will never get a wife, because he has only got genius, and goodness, and three thousand pounds. No, papa, I have not told poor Christopher. I may tease those I love; I have been teasing *you* this ever so long; but frighten them, and make them miserable? No.'

And here, thinking of the anguish that was perhaps in store for those she loved, she wanted to cry; it almost choked her not to. But she fought it bravely down: she reserved her tears for lighter occasions and less noble sentiments.

Her father held out his arms to her; she ran her footstool to him, and sat nestling to his heart.

'Please forgive me my misconduct. I have not been a dutiful daughter ever since you——but now I will. Kiss me, my own papa. There! Now we are as we always were.'

Then she purred to him on every possible topic but the one that now filled his parental heart, and bade him good-night at last with a cheerful smile.

Wyman was exact, and ten minutes afterwards Dr. Snell drove up in a carriage and pair. He was intercepted in the hall by Wyman, and, after a few minutes' conversation, presented to Mr. Lusignan.

The father gave vent to his paternal anxiety in a few simple, but touching words, and was proceeding to state the symptoms as he had gathered them from his daughter; but Dr. Snell interrupted him politely, and said he had heard the principal symptoms from Mr. Wyman. Then, turning to the latter, he said, 'We had better proceed to examine the patient.'

'Certainly,' said Mr. Lusignan.

'She is in the drawing-room;' and he led the way, and was about to enter the room, when Wyman informed him it was against etiquette for him to be present at the examination.

'Oh, very well,' said he. 'Yes, I see the propriety of that. But oblige me by asking her if she has anything on her mind.'

Dr. Snell bowed a lofty assent; for to receive a hint from a layman was to confer a favour on him.

The men of science were closeted full half an hour with the patient. She was too beautiful to be slurred over, even by a busy doctor: he felt her pulse, looked at her tongue, and listened attentively to her lungs, to her heart, and to the organ suspected by Wyman. He left her at last with a kindly assurance that the case was perfectly curable.

At the door they were met by the anxious father, who came, with throbbing heart, and asked the doctor's verdict.

He was coolly informed that could not be given until the consultation had taken place; the result of that consultation would be conveyed to him.

'And pray why can't I be present at the consultation? The grounds on which two able men agree or disagree must be well worth listening to.'

'No doubt,' said Dr. Snell; 'but,' with a superior smile, 'my dear sir, it is not the etiquette.'

'Oh, very well,' said Lusignan. But he muttered, 'So then, a father is nobody.'

And this unreasonable person retired to his study, miserable, and gave up the dining-room to the consultation.

They soon rejoined him.

Dr. Snell's opinion was communicated by Wyman. 'I am happy to tell you that Dr. Snell agrees with me entirely: the

lungs are not affected, and the liver is congested, but not diseased.'

'Is that so, Dr. Snell?' asked Lusignan, anxiously.

'It is so, sir.' He added, 'The treatment has been submitted to me, and I quite approve it.'

He then asked for a pen and paper, and wrote a prescription. He assured Mr. Lusignan that the case had no extraordinary feature whatever; he was not to alarm himself. Dr. Snell then drove away, leaving the parent rather puzzled, but, on the whole, much comforted.

And here I must reveal an extraordinary circumstance—

Wyman's treatment was by drugs.

Dr. Snell's was by drugs.

Dr. Snell, as you have seen, entirely approved Wyman's treatment.

His own had nothing in common with it. The Arctic and Antarctic poles are not farther apart than was his prescription from the prescription he thoroughly approved.

Amiable science! In which complete diversity of practice did not interfere with perfect uniformity of opinion.

All this was kept from Dr. Staines, and he was entirely occupied in trying to get a position that might lead to fortune and satisfy Mr. Lusignan. He called on every friend he had, to inquire where there was an opening. He walked miles and miles in the best quarters of London, looking for an opening; he let it be known in many quarters that he would give a good premium to any physician who was about to retire, and would introduce him to his patients.

No; he could hear of nothing.

Then, after a great struggle with himself, he called upon his

uncle, Philip Staines, a retired M.D., to see if he would do anything for him. He left this to the last, for a very good reason: Dr. Philip was an irritable old bachelor, who had assisted most of his married relatives; but, finding no bottom to the well, had turned rusty and crusty, and now was apt to administer kicks instead of cheques, to all who were near and dear to him. However, Christopher was the old gentleman's favourite, and was now desperate; so he mustered courage, and went. He was graciously received; warmly indeed. This gave him great hopes, and he told his tale.

The old bachelor sided with Mr. Lusignan. 'What!' said he, 'do you want to marry, and propagate pauperism? I thought you had more sense. Confound it all! I had just one nephew whose knock at my street-door did not make me tremble; he was a bachelor, and a thinker, and came for a friendly chat; the rest are married men, highwaymen, who come to say, "Stand and deliver;" and now even you want to join the giddy throng. Well, don't ask me to have any hand in it. You are a man of promise; and you might as well hang a mill-stone round your neck as a wife. Marriage is a greater mistake than ever now; the women dress more, and manage worse. I met your cousin Jack the other day, and his wife with seventy pounds on her back; and next door to paupers. No; whilst you are a bachelor, like me, you are my favourite, and down in my will for a lump. Once marry, and you join the noble army of footpads, leeches, vultures, paupers, gone coons, and babblers about brats—and I disown you.'

There was no hope from old Crusty. Christopher left him, snubbed, and heart-sick. At last

he met a sensible man, who made him see there was no short cut in that profession. He must be content to play the uphill game; must settle in some good neighbourhood, marry if possible, since husbands, and fathers of families, prefer married physicians; and so be poor at thirty, comfortable at forty, and rich at fifty—perhaps.

Then Christopher came down to his lodgings at Gravesend, and was very unhappy; and, after some days of misery, he wrote a letter to Rosa in a moment of impatience, despondency, and passion.

Rosa Lusignan got worse and worse. The slight but frequent hemorrhage was a drain upon her system, and weakened her visibly. She began to lose her rich complexion, and sometimes looked almost sallow; and a slight circle showed itself under her eyes. These symptoms were unfavourable; nevertheless, Dr. Snell and Mr. Wyman accepted them cheerfully, as fresh indications that nothing was affected but the liver; they multiplied and varied their prescriptions; the malady ignored those prescriptions, and went steadily on. Mr. Lusignan was terrified, but helpless. Rosa resigned and reticent.

But it was not in human nature that a girl of this age could always, and at all hours, be mistress of herself. One evening in particular she stood before the glass in the drawing-room, and looked at herself a long time with horror: 'Is that Rosa Lusignan?' said she, aloud, 'it is her ghost.'

A deep groan startled her. She turned; it was her father. She thought he was fast asleep; and so indeed he had been; but he was just awaking, and heard his daughter utter her real mind. It

was a thunderclap. 'Oh! my child! what shall I do?' he cried.

Then Rosa was taken by surprise in her turn. She spoke out. 'Send for a great physician, papa. Don't let us deceive ourselves; it is our only chance.'

'I will ask Mr. Wyman to get a physician down from London.'

'No, no; that is no use; they will put their heads together, and he will say whatever Mr. Wyman tells him. La, papa! a clever man like you, not to see what a cheat that consultation was. Why, from what you told me, one can see it was arranged, it was managed so that Dr. Snell could not possibly have an opinion of his own. No; no more echoes of Mr. Chatterbox. If you really want to cure me, send for Christopher Staines.'

'Dr. Staines! he is very young.'

'But he is very clever, and he is not an echo. He won't care how many doctors he contradicts, when I am in danger. Papa, it is your child's one chance.'

'I'll try it,' said the old man, eagerly. 'How confident you look! your colour has come back. It is an inspiration. Where is he?'

'I think by this time he must be at his lodgings in Gravesend. Send to him to-morrow morning.'

'Not I. I'll go to him to-night. It is only a mile, and a fine clear night.'

'My own, good, kind papa! Ah well, come what may, I have lived long enough to be loved. Yes, dear papa, save me. I am very young to die; and he loves me so dearly.'

The old man bustled away to put on something warmer for his night walk, and Rosa leaned back and the tears welled out of her eyes, now he was gone.

Before she had recovered her composure, a letter was brought her, and this was the letter, from

Christopher Staines, alluded to already.

She took it from the servant, with averted head, not wishing it to be seen she had been crying, and she started at the handwriting; it seemed such a coincidence that it should come just as she was sending for him.

'MY OWN BELOVED ROSA,

'I now write to tell you, with a heavy heart, that all is vain. I cannot make, or purchase, a connection, except as others do, by time and patience. Being a bachelor is quite against a young physician. If I had a wife, and such a wife as you, I should be sure to get on; you would increase my connection very soon. What, then, lies before us? I see but two things—to wait till we are old, and our pockets are filled, but our hearts chilled or soured; or else to marry at once, and climb the hill together. If you love me, as I love you, you will be saving, till the battle is over and I feel I could find energy and fortitude for both. Your father, who thinks so much of wealth, can surely settle something on *you*; and I am not too poor to furnish a house and start fair. I am not quite obscure—my lectures have given me a name—and to you, my own love, I hope I may say that I know more than many of my elders, thanks to good schools, good method, a genuine love of my noble profession, and a tendency to study from my childhood. Will you not risk something on my ability? If not, God help me, for I shall lose you; and what is life, or fame, or wealth, or any mortal thing to me, without you? I cannot accept your father's decision; *you* must decide my fate.

'You see I have kept away from you until I can do so no

more. All this time the world to me has seemed to want the sun, and my heart pines and sickens for one sight of you. Darling Rosa, pray let me look at your face once more.

'When this reaches you I shall be at your gate. Let me see you, though but for a moment, and let me hear my fate from no lips but yours.

'My own love,

'Your heart-broken lover

'CHRISTOPHER STAINES.

This letter stunned her at first. Her mind of late had been turned away from love to such stern realities. Now she began to be sorry she had not told him. 'Poor thing!' she said to herself, 'he little thinks that now all is changed; papa, I sometimes think, would deny me nothing now; it is I who would not marry him—to be buried by him in a month or two. Poor Christopher!'

The next moment she started up in dismay. Why, her father would miss him. No, perhaps catch him waiting for her. What would he think? What would Christopher think? that she had shown her papa his letter.

She rang the bell hard. The footman came.

'Send Harriet to me this instant. Oh! and ask papa to come to me.'

Then she sat down, and dashed off a line to Christopher. This was for Harriet to take out to him. Anything better than for Christopher to be caught doing what was wrong.

The footman came back first. 'If you please, miss, master has gone out.'

'Run after him—the road to Gravesend.'

'Yes, miss.'

'No. It is no use. Never mind.'

'Yes, miss.'

Then Harriet came in. 'Did you want me, miss.'

'Yes. No—never mind now.'

She was afraid to do anything for fear of making matters worse. She went to the window, and stood looking anxiously out, with her hands working. Presently she uttered a little scream, and shrank away to the sofa. She sank down on it, half sitting, half lying, hid her face in her hands, and waited.

Staines, with a lover's impatience, had been more than an hour at the gate, or walking up and down close by it, his heart now burning with hope, now freezing with fear, that she would decline a meeting on these terms.

At last the postman came, and then he saw his mistake; but now in a few minutes Rosa would have his letter, and then he should soon know whether she would come or not. He looked up at the drawing-room windows. They were full of light. She was there, in all probability. Yet she did not come to them. But why should she, if she was coming out?

He walked up and down the road. She did not come. His heart began to sicken with doubt. His head drooped; and perhaps it was owing to this that he almost ran against a gentleman who was coming the other way. The moon shone bright on both faces.

'Dr. Staines!' said Mr. Lusignan, surprised. Christopher uttered an ejaculation more eloquent than words.

They stared at each other.

'You were coming to see us?'

'N—no,' stammered Christopher.

Lusignan thought that odd; however, he said, politely, 'No

matter, it is fortunate. Would you mind coming in?"

'No,' faltered Christopher, and stared at him ruefully, puzzled more and more; but beginning to think, after all, it might be a casual meeting.

They entered the gate, and, in one moment, he saw Rosa at the window, and she saw him.

Then he altered his opinion again. Rosa had sent her father out to him. But how was this? the old man did not seem angry. Christopher's heart gave a leap inside him, and he began to glow with the wildest hopes. For what could this mean but relenting?

Mr. Lusignan took him first into the study, and lighted two candles himself. He did not want the servants prying.

The lights showed Christopher a change in Mr. Lusignan. He looked ten years older.

'You are not well, sir,' said Christopher, gently.

'My health is well enough; but I am a broken-hearted man. Dr. Staines, forget all that passed here at your last visit. All that is over. Thank you for loving my poor girl as you do; give me your hand; God bless you. Sir, I am sorry to say it is as a physician I invite you now. She is ill, sir, very—very ill.'

'Ill! and not tell me!'

'She kept it from you, my poor friend, not to distress you; and she tried to keep it from me; but how could she? for two months she has had some terrible complaint—it is destroying her. She is the ghost of herself. Oh, my poor child! my child!'

The old man sobbed aloud. The young man stood trembling, and

ashy pale. Still, the habits of his profession, and the experience of dangers overcome, together with a certain sense of power, kept him up; but, above all, love and duty said, 'Be firm.' He asked for an outline of the symptoms.

They alarmed him greatly.

'Let us lose no more time,' said he, 'I will see her at once.'

'Do you object to my being present?'

'Of course not.'

'Shall I tell you what Dr. Snell says it is, and Mr. Wyman?'

'By all means—after I have seen her.'

This comforted Mr. Lusignan. He was to get an independent judgment at all events.

When they reached the top of the stairs Dr. Staines paused, and leaned against the baluster. 'Give me a moment,' said he. 'The patient must not know how my heart is beating; and she must see nothing in my face but what I choose her to see. Give me your hand once more, sir; let us both control ourselves. Now announce me.'

Mr. Lusignan opened the door, and said, with forced cheerfulness, 'Dr. Staines, my dear! come to give you the benefit of his skill.'

She lay on the sofa, just as we left her. Only her bosom began to heave.

Then Christopher Staines drew himself up, and the majesty of knowledge and love together seemed to dilate his noble frame. He fixed his eye on that reclining, panting figure, and stepped lightly but firmly across the room, to know the worst—like a lion walking up to levelled lances.

(To be continued.)

THE DOMESTIC LIFE OF MIRABEAU.

'Tell me if, with all his faults, Mirabeau is not adorable?'

Mary Russell Mitford.

IT was in the year 1783 that two noble old men, splendid in appearance, and magnificent in manner, who looked as if they had been forgotten by the century before and left as types of a better and more refined age, met together to hold a family council upon a black sheep—a prodigal son who after having passed through an early youth distinguished by every vice and folly had appeared before them as a penitent. It was like a scene in a play, almost grand enough for Corneille, almost laughable enough for Molière. One can imagine the two, leaning on their gold-headed canes, recalling the costume of Louis-Quatorze and speaking the language of St. Simon—wisdom and justice (without mercy) breathing morality through their lips—the Marquis and the Commander—Victor Riguetti or Arrighetti with his brother Jean Antoine, Bailli de Mirabeau: and this black sheep, this prodigal son—'l'Ouragan' as his family called him—the world calls by a name which will never be forgotten. It is Mirabeau.

Ten years after, an immense crowd gathered before the gates of a house in the Chaussée d'Autin where a man lay dying. The people thronged the street, the court, the staircase, to hear the last verdict of the physicians—and that was that there was no hope. Hardly had those who stood by the bed-side pronounced the fatal words, '*Il est mort*,' when the President of the National Assembly rose, and in a voice broken with sobs proposed that a deputation should attend the funeral rites of the great man. The reply was

made with one voice: 'We will all attend!'

The great man of 1791, was the black sheep of 1781.

* * * * *

Genial, generous, sensitive; full of a wild, undisciplined force—boiling over with ambition—covetous of glory; ardent, indefatigable, audacious—Honoré Gabriel Mirabeau, with his burning southern temperament and his tempestuous passions, was one of those great representative men the details of whose life possess an almost inexhaustible interest; and however wild the follies of his youth, it cannot but be allowed that his death at the beginning of the Revolution was a signal misfortune to his country.

In these days of domestic peace and unbounded domestic indulgence it is difficult to realise the paternal severity of which Mirabeau was the victim—a severity which increased, instead of diminishing, faults that a kinder and more generous treatment might have corrected. 'Let my father only condescend to know me,' he wrote to his uncle the Bailli. 'He thinks I have a bad heart; but let him only put me to the proof:' touching words, met only by sarcasm and disbelief, and even added persecution.

'A turbulent spirit,—proud, overbearing, insubordinate, a cruel and vicious disposition:' these were the terms by which he was branded; yet his crimes were those of a grand although ungovernable nature, of a violent precocious physical temperament, of a man whose misfortunes were greater than his faults, and whose faults were far blacker

than the source from which they sprung.

Issue of a race distinguished for five centuries by fiery originality of character, Mirabeau was endowed, both morally and physically, with faculties forcible beyond all ordinary bounds. His childhood—his youth, ardent and stormy, were ill-understood and ill-governed; turbulent at an age when according to the decrees of Providence both soul and body ferment in order to arrive at due maturity; refractory, because too harshly restrained; unruly, because the regulations imposed upon him were unjust and unreasonable; hot-headed, because undue authority repels, where kindness and good sense would soften; ungovernable, because his superior force and intelligence were treated without the consideration which prudence accords even to weakness and folly—he was still affectionate, tender, generous and sincere, having the instinct, the desire, the passionate love of right.

At an early age the Marquis writes of his son that the system of education he was pursuing, under the direction of a relation and friend of the family, was much too lenient for so 'violent a scoundrel,' and he was accordingly removed to a military school, under the name of Pierre Buffière. 'I do not choose,' continued the father, 'that a name which is adorned with some lustre should be dragged over the benches of a school of correction.'

It would appear that, contrary to expectation, the Abbé Choquard succeeded in more than half taming Monsieur Pierre Buffière; at all events he pursued his studies with a rapidity and success without parallel. His memory was prodigious, and he possessed a remarkable facility in mastering both dead and living languages, was a good

mathematician, drew well, and displayed a great talent for music, besides finding time for all the manly exercises of the day.

In 1767 Gabriel was allowed to join the regiment of the Marquis de Lambert, where he conducted himself well and showed such signs of military capacity, that at the age of eighteen he obtained the rank of lieutenant; and even his father's animosity was somewhat softened. It was, however, rekindled by an incident which might easily have been foreseen. The young Gabriel, kept without sufficient pecuniary resources, got into debt and even lost money at play; two utterly unpardonable sins in the eyes of the Marquis, who declared that he would devour twenty fortunes and twelve kingdoms if they were put into his hand!

The Marquis de Lambert, whom he had supplanted in a love affair, became his implacable enemy; and Mirabeau alone against his superiors had to defend his own cause before a court-martial, which ended in his first imprisonment at La Rochelle; there, as usual, he won the affection of those around him: in his father's words, he 'bewitched' the governor, who procured his release, and permission to join the legion of Lorraine which was preparing to take possession of Corsica. It was an expedition which had neither the interest of a defensive war, nor the prestige of a chivalrous invasion. It had nothing attractive to the imagination of Mirabeau; and some years later, as a member of the Legislative Assembly, he openly regretted his participation (not, however, altogether voluntary, since the choice lay between imprisonment and freedom) in an act of conquest which he considered unjust towards a peaceable and generous people.

On his return to France, after about a year's absence, he writes

to his uncle to beg permission to pay him a visit, which was obtained, although not without some hesitation. The Bailli gives his brother an account of the interview in the following terms:

'Yesterday (14th May, 1770) I was quite surprised. A soldier brought me a letter from M. Pierre Buffière, who asked to see me. I replied that he might come. I was enchanted to see him. My heart swelled. I found him ugly but not of a bad countenance, and, in spite of the ravages of small-pox, which have altered his features sadly, he has something in his face both gracious and noble. If he is not worse than Nero, he will be better than Marcus Aurelius, for I do not think I ever saw so much intelligence. My poor head was quite engrossed. He appears to me to dread you like the provost-marshal! but he swears that there is nothing he would not do to please you. He confesses all his follies, but says that he was in despair; he said to the Abbé* that he had been wrongly treated from his infancy and that Vioménil, his last colonel, had overcome him with reason and gentleness, and had made him recognise in good conduct a new order of things. I assure you I found him very repentant of all his past faults. He seems to have a feeling heart. As for cleverness, I have already spoken of it—the devil hasn't half so much! and I repeat, either he is the most adroit hypocrite in the world or he will become the best subject in Europe, to be made general on land or water, minister, chancellor, or pope—whatever he will.'

The comments of the Marquis upon this account of his son's tone are conceived in his usual tone of suspicion and sarcasm.

* Castagny, private chaplain at Mirabeau.

'The good Bailli,' he writes to his son-in-law the Marquis de Sailant, 'has kept him several days, and the romance which pervades like a perfume this good-for-nothing, from top to toe, has got into his uncle's head, which is, however, generally pretty strong. He has been "engrossed! enchanted!"—these are his own words; the rogue has been going through all his tricks;* he may take in his uncle—so be it—but he will not win over his father quite so cheaply.'

In spite of the application and intelligence which the young soldier had displayed in his short military career, the Marquis now appears to wish to turn him from it—as he himself says, '*to make him rural*!' and to this end he commands him to set to work to peruse books on economy and farming, studies ill-suited to his taste; but Gabriel complains of nothing whilst still permitted to reside with his uncle, whose simple, honest, affectionate nature exercised the greatest influence over his own, and who never ceased interceding for him with all the power of his pen. He at last so far succeeded that the Marquis consented to receive his son.

'M. Pierre Buffière,' wrote the excellent Bailli, 'will be the bearer of this letter, my dear brother. He leaves me to-day. Perhaps you will not find him very well up in the profession of *economist*, but in the first place I have not troubled him too much on the subject, since the way to succeed in anything is not to set one's heart too much upon it; a strong wish makes one see double, and in general nothing turns out as one desires, except what is almost indifferent. Next, as your son has a great deal of intelligence, and even genius, there are always plenty of

* Le drole a joué ses grandes manœuvres.

resources for such sort of men. Besides, if you will excuse me, the subject is rather a cold one for so hot a head. Surely it is unnecessary to tell you that it would be as ridiculous in a father to insist on his children conforming exactly to his ideas as to make them wear his shoes; and so long as the heart is all right one should not dispute about difference of taste.

‘He is naturally very industrious, and I have given him your notions and my own upon *work*; telling him that nothing so steadies life, which, on the contrary, wastes away so sadly in idleness and pleasure; that the mind becomes stronger and more refined as the dregs and the refuse are cleared away, and that one of the physical proofs of the immortality of the soul is the spirit and fire of men who are active in their old age—who only half die; that part only perishing which was ever a burden.

‘For the rest, your son fears, respects, and loves you; but I fancy I have got at his mind by showing how much I care for him. I think that without losing any of the weight of paternal authority, it is better to show him interest and kindness. Not only will you know him better but your lessons will take more root; for a son although he cannot contradict his father, may very well not allow himself to be convinced by him. As I have been a son myself I know how it used to be with me; my education was only formed by those who treated me with friendship, and when my father blamed me, I held my tongue, but my private opinions took their own course.’

A few months after this, the Marquis actually consents that his son should bear his name; he takes him to Paris and presents him at Court and to his friends: somewhat proud, although unwilling to allow it, of his wit, sense,

and the impression produced by his manners, ‘respectful but not servile, easy but not familiar.’ He even writes to the Bailli that his nephew might, after a few more years’ association with himself, do honour to those belonging to him, and that a woman of good sense and amiability might do the rest. In this hope Mirabeau was married, in 1772, to Marie Emilie de Covet, only daughter of the Marquis de Marignane. She was plain, even rather common in appearance, dark, beautiful eyes and hair, bad teeth, a pretty smile, little, but well-made, gay, agreeable, sensible, and clever. He has been accused of frittering away his wife’s fortune, but that could not possibly have been the case, as he never received even a sou of it. She had the promise of three hundred thousand francs on the death of the Marquis de Marignane, who, however, survived his son-in-law, and the Marquis de Mirabeau had to endow the young couple with a small pension which proved utterly insufficient for all their ‘clothes, furniture, jewels, and gewgaws.’ As debts increased upon him Mirabeau appeared to get more reckless in his expenditure, and his father—only too ready as ever to believe every accusation against him—provided himself with a *lettre de cachet*, and used it without mercy, ordering him to quit the Château de Mirabeau and to confine himself to the little town of Manosque. It was the time when the powers of the Crown came in aid of aristocratic pride and aristocratic fury, and the State prisons yawned to receive whatever victim was required by the demon of family pride or domestic tyranny. The impulsive and turbulent Gabriel was not long before he furnished a new occasion for the exercise of that undue severity which was the original cause of

misfortunes, henceforward to be without end and without remedy.

There had been a very innocent flirtation between the Countess de Mirabeau and a cousin of hers, the Chevalier de Gassaud, before her marriage, and some letters which had been exchanged containing more love of amusement on the one side, and coquetry on the other, than any real feeling, fell into the hands of her husband. Jealousy was violent with him, like every other passion, and a duel became imminent. The parents of the Chevalier interfered, and Mirabeau, who felt himself in the wrong, accepted the necessary explanations; the more easily that he learned that the *esclandre* was likely to break off an advantageous marriage between the Chevalier and a daughter of the Marquis de Tourette.

Reproaching himself for his impetuosity, and regretting the error into which he had fallen, he forgot his legal bonds and hurried away to explain the circumstances of the case. His eloquence was successful, and he was about to return to his place of banishment, when unfortunately he met the Baron de Villeneuve Moans, who, under pretext of a public quarrel, had some time before very grievously insulted Mirabeau's sister, the Marquise de CCaris. Mirabeau could not refuse himself the pleasure of horsewhipping the Baron then and there before several witnesses; a deed of violence which formed an excuse for sending him to the Château d'If, an arid rock at the entrance of the Port of Marseilles, although his uncle again attempted his exculpation, and declared that he saw nothing so extraordinary in the nephew of his uncle, and the son of his father, thrashing an insolent gentleman, and that in his place he should have done the same.

At the Château d'If, as under the tutelage of M. Choquart, in the Ile de Ré—the regiment his uncle's house, Mirabeau had been preceded by letters where the Marquis exaggerated every fault; but here, as elsewhere, the prejudices raised against him were speedily overcome by his genial nature, and the engaging mixture of impetuosity and sweetness which made his manners so seductive. He followed to the letter the advice given him by his wife—who however was the first to desert him in his misfortunes—when she wrote, 'Make use, dear angel, of that magic which you possess when you want to enchant anyone.'

For some months Mirabeau remained sad and solitary in his new dungeon: he saw no one—all society, and even pen and ink were denied him,—and, patient as he habitually was under increasing persecution, he himself declared that, 'to suffer at once every grief, and to lose in one moment all consolation,' was a blow which he could not long resist.'

It would perhaps, however, have been better for him if this vigorous imprisonment had continued. A slight relaxation of its severity brought him into contact with Claude François Marquis de Mounier, and his wife Marie Thérèse Richard de Ruffey, who pitying sincerely the condition of the captive, obtained for him permission to visit them at Pont-arlier.

The Marquis, an old man, liked to hear him recount the history of his misfortunes, and to lavish upon him much good advice; and his wife, who was only eighteen years of age, found the society of a man who united all the charms of sensibility and genius to suffering and sorrow, only too dangerously seductive. Sad as was the end of the story, the beginning doubtless had

its charm, when in the words of St. Beuve, the poor prisoner, rejoicing in a partial freedom from captivity, came to Pontarlier to the old Marquis de Mounier, whose house alone was open to him; when he related before him and his young wife the misfortunes and the faults which had brought him to so sad a pass; and she, like Desdemona and Dido and every woman that ever lived, wept over all that he had done and suffered—loving him the more for it.

‘I was very unhappy,’ Mirabeau pleads, ‘and unhappiness makes one doubly susceptible. I needed kindness, and every charm of wit and beauty was displayed before me. I sought consolation—and what consoler like love?’

He did not, however, yield without a struggle to this unhappy passion. He wrote to his father; he implored permission to return to his family: was refused, escaped from the Château d’If—and was joined by Sophie de Mounier.

They fled to Holland, and there for some time Mirabeau supported himself by his writings; but monsieur and madame de Ruffey took measures to pursue their daughter, and Mirabeau was still followed by his father’s unrelenting animosity. Both were arrested at Amsterdam.

May 14, 1777. Madame de Mounier was imprisoned in Paris. Mirabeau in the dungeon of Vincennes, where he remained nearly four years, treated with the utmost severity, deprived of all companionship, and where, in his own words, ‘tête-à-tête with grief,’ his only consolation was the correspondence with Madame de Mounier, permitted through the pity of the Lieutenant-General of Police, M. de Lamoignon, whose affection he entirely gained.

These ‘Lettres à Sophie’—

famous letters, which have been thought as far superior to Rousseau as passion is to sentiment, or truth to fiction,—were entrusted to the care of M. Boucher, an excellent, disinterested man, who was appointed by M. Lenoir for the immediate surveillance of Mirabeau; and for some time he observed with rigour the prescribed injunctions as to their length, number, the subject on which they were written, and the interval to elapse between each one; but by degrees, touched by the ever-renewed expressions of gratitude, and reassured by the resignation and docility of his prisoner, M. Boucher relaxed some of the imposed restrictions. He allowed him to write so many and such interminable effusions, that it may be fairly surmised he did not always find time to read them. He was only strict in insisting on the originals being returned to him, when he religiously placed them amongst the prison documents, where they were found thirteen years afterwards, and taken, or rather stolen, by Manuel, the Procureur de la Commune, who made a good speculation of them.

Through the exertions of his friends, Mirabeau was at length liberated and was permitted to join the Marquis, who wrote to his brother, the Bailli, in the following terms:

‘I must tell you that Honoré improves visibly, although when I first saw him he was madder than ever. They were all frightened to death at my taking him; the more so, that my children* were left behind. However, I flatter myself I can see as well as most people, when I look about me; and in spite of the ugly face, the bad walk, the bullying precipitation, the

* M. and Madame de Saillant.

puffed-up hurry and pride of the man, and his atrocious stare, or rather frown, when he listens and reflects, something tells me that he is only an empty bugbear, and that all the ferocity with which he has contrived to surround his person, his reputation, and his behaviour, is nothing but smoke, as well as his learning and his talk, and that at the bottom he is perhaps the last man in the kingdom to commit a wilful act of wickedness.'

Madame de Mounier had also regained her freedom on the death of her husband, but she remained in the Convent of the 'Saintes Claires,' where she had found a safe and peaceable asylum.

It has been said that Mirabeau deserted her, and that she committed suicide at finding herself abandoned by him to whom she had sacrificed everything; but the facts are otherwise, and however painful the history may be, there can be little doubt that the 'douce Sophie' of 'Honoré Gabriel' was the one love of his life.

The first part of the life of Mirabeau was filled with Sophie; the second by the Revolution. Alone with his genius, he attacked with all the force of his ardent nature, the despotism from which he had so cruelly suffered,—the Government, the laws, the tribunals which he hated. Paternity had been to him what royalty was to the nation. He became an orator; not according to Cicero, but after his own soul, after his own life,—because he had suffered—because he had failed.

When he first arrived as the Aix deputy to the States-General, his appearance neither created remark or envy; but his eminent talents, his delicate tact—and perhaps more than all, his audacity,—soon won for him the position which he only lost with

his life. Dumont, the friend of Sheridan, Fox, and Lord Holland, describes his eloquence as irresistible. His voice was full, manly, sonorous, and not the least inflection of it was lost. His manner is described by the same pen as being ordinarily a little slow. He would begin with some hesitation, but only sufficient to excite interest; he appeared to be seeking for the most desirable expression; to reject, to choose, to weigh every term until he became animated, and that the bellows of the forge were in full play. In his most impetuous moments, the sentiment which made him weigh every word to give it its full force, prevented him from being ever rapid.

He had the greatest contempt for French volubility, and for that clap-trap fervour which he called the thunders and the tempests of the opera. He never lost the gravity of the statesman; and his one defect was, perhaps, a little too much study and pretension. He raised his head with too much pride, and marked his disdain sometimes almost to insolence. He used to count amongst his advantages, his strong square figure, his marked features, his heavy brows, his enormous head of hair. 'No one knows,' he would say, 'all the power of my ugliness: when I shake my terrible mane, none dare interrupt me!'

The one drawback to a power which would otherwise have been irresistible, and which might have altered the destinies of his country, was the stigma attached to his youth. He knew—none better—that if he had enjoyed a high personal consideration, all France would have been at his feet. As it was, he shines out from the darkness of the time with all the sombre splendor which surrounds the names of revolutionary men.

SKETCHES FROM PARIS.

'On the Surface.'

MESDAMES FOLIBEL occupied a double set of rooms, *au premier*, on the Boulevards des Italiens. On a door to the right a large brass plate announced that Madame Augustine Folibel presided over *lingerie et dentelles*, and invited the public to 'tourner le bouton.' To the left a large steel plate proclaimed Madame Alexandrine Folibel, *modiste*, and invited the public to 'ring the bell.' But after a certain hour every day, both these invitations were negated by a page in buttons, who, stationed at either door, kept the way open for the ceaseless flow of visitors passing in and out of the two establishments.

My friend, Berthe de Bonton, was just turning into the *lingerie* department, when I came up the stairs.

'How lucky!' she exclaimed, running across the landing to me, and then in a *sotto voce*, 'Madame Clifford,' pronounced Cleefore, 'is here, and wants me to choose a bonnet for her. Now, if there's a thing I hate it's choosing a bonnet for an Englishwoman. To begin with, they haven't the first rudiments of culture in dress, then they can never make up their minds, and they find everything too dear; but the crowning absurdity is, that they bring their husbands with them, and consult them! Figurez-vous, ma chère!' and Berthe, with a Frenchwoman's keen sense of the comic, laughed merrily at the conceit. I laughed with her, though not perhaps quite from the same point of view; I made an excuse to get away for a few minutes, and left the *ménage* discussing a pink tulle, with marabout and beetle-wings

trimming; 'un petit poème, chérie; but—' she seized me by the arm, 'fancy Madame Cleefore's complexion under it.'

'Ah, bon jour, Mesdames! I am at the orders of ces dames. Will they take the trouble to seat themselves just for one second!' entreated Madame Augustine, who greeted us in the first salon, where she was carrying on a warm debate on the merits of Alençon *versus* Valenciennes, as a trimming for a bridal peignoir.

'I only want to say a word with reference to my order of yesterday; where is Mademoiselle Florine?' inquired Berthe, looking round the room where there were several groups ordering pretty things.

'Florine! Florine!' called out Madame Augustine.

'Voici, Madame!'

Mademoiselle Florine was a plump little *boulotte* of a woman, who wore her nose *retroussé*, and always looked at you as if she had reason to complain of you. Without being the least uncivil she looked it. Her nose was uncivil; it had a supercilious expression that made you feel it was considering you *de haut en bas*. The fact is, Mademoiselle Florine was not happy—she was disappointed. not in love, but with life in general, and with *lingerie* in particular. She had adopted *lingerie* as a vocation, and it was going down in the world; it was degenerating into *pacotille*; *grandes dames* were beginning to grow cold about it, and to wear collars and cuffs that a *petite bourgeoise* would have turned up her nose at ten years ago. More grievous still was the change that had come over petticoats,

The deterioration in this line she took terribly to heart, and the surest way to enlist her good graces and secure her interest in your order, be it ever so small, was to preface it with a sigh or a sneer at red Balmorals or other gaudy and economical inventions which had dethroned the snowy *jupon blanc* of her youth, with its tucks and frills and dainty edgings of lace or embroidery.

Berthe, it so happened, shared very strongly this dislike to coloured petticoats, and was guilty of considerable extravagance in the choice of white ones; Mademoiselle Florine's sympathies consequently went out to her, and no matter how busily she was engaged or with whom, she would fly to Berthe as to a kindred soul the moment she appeared.

'I have been thinking over those jupons à traîne that I ordered yesterday,' said Berthe, to the pugnacious-looking little *lingère*, 'and I have an idea that the *entre-deux anglais* will be a failure. We ought to have decided on Valenciennes.'

'Ah! I thought Madame la Comtesse would come round to it!' observed Mademoiselle Florine, with a smile of supreme satisfaction; 'I told Madame la Comtesse it was a mistake.'

'Yes; I felt you did not approve; but really twelve hundred francs for six petticoats did seem a great deal,' observed Berthe, deprecatingly; 'now suppose we put alternately one row of deep *entre-deux* and a *tuyauté batiste*, edged with a narrow Valenciennes, instead of *all* Valenciennes?'

'Voyons, réfléchissons!' said Mademoiselle Florine, putting her finger to her lips and knitting her brow.

'It occurred to me in my bed last night,' continued Berthe; and

I fell asleep and actually dreamed of it, and you can't think how pretty it looked, so light, and, at the same time, *très garni*.'

'A la bonne heure! Parlez-moi d'une pratique comme cela!' exclaimed Mademoiselle Florine, clasping her hands, and turning to me with a look of admiration, which was almost affecting from its earnestness; 'there is some compensation in working for Madame at least. If *ces dames* knew what I have to endure from *les trois quarts du monde*!' and she threw up her hands and shook her head in the direction of the *premier salon*. 'But let me get out the models and see how this dream of Madame la Comtesse looks in reality.'

Boxes of lace and embroidery were ordered out by the excited *lingère*, and under her deft and nimble fingers the dream was illustrated in the course of a few minutes. Berthe was undecided. She sat down, and surveyed the combination in silent perplexity.

'Vraiment cette question de jupons complique trop la vie!' she sighed, presently, 'and now I begin to ask myself if these will go with any of my new dresses? The *crinoline éventail* is going out, Monsieur Grand-homme told me, and they will never go with the *queue de moineau* that he is bringing in.'

Here was a predicament!

'Attendez,' said Florine, dropping a dozen *rouleaux* of lace on the floor as if such costly *chiffons*, the mere mortar and clay of her airy architecture, were not worth a thought; '*laissons la question de jupons pendante*; I will go myself this evening and discuss the toilettes of Madame la Comtesse with her *femme de chambre*; we will see the style and fall of the new skirts and adapt the jupons to them.'

'Que vous êtes bonne!' exclaimed Berthe, looking and feeling grateful for this unlooked-for solution of her difficulty.

'It is a consolation to me, Madame la Comtesse,' replied Mademoiselle Florine, with a sigh, and I need a little now and then!

We wished her good morning.

'Let us go back now to Alexandrine,' said Berthe, 'I hope Mrs. Clifford has made up her mind by this time.'

But the hope was vain. Mrs. Clifford was standing with her back to the long mirror looking at herself as reflected in a hand-glass that she turned so as to view her head in every possible aspect, while Mr. Clifford looked on.

'Do you think it does?' she inquired, as we came up to her.

'I think a darker shade would suit you better,' I said, 'that pale pink has no mercy on one's complexion.'

'I've tried on nearly every bonnet on the table,' she said, looking very miserable, 'and they don't any of them seem to do.'

'Madame will not understand that the first condition of a bonnet's suiting, after the complexion of course, is that the hair should be dressed with regard to it,' interposed Madame Alexandrine, who, I could see by her flushed face and nervous manner, was, as she would say herself, *à bout de patience*; 'these bonnets are all made for the coiffure à la mode, whereas Madame wears un peigne à galerie. Mon Dieu! mais il y a six mois que le peigne à galerie ne se porte plus!'

I suggested *à l'appui* of this undeniable argument, that the comb should be suppressed.

'Oh, dear no, I wouldn't give it up for the world!' said Mrs. Clifford, with the emphatic man-

ner she might have used if I had proposed her giving up her spectacles.

'Then you must have one made to order.'

'Yes, said Madame Alexandrine, 'I will make one for Madame after a modèle à part.'

'But then it will be dowdy and old-fashioned!' demurred the Englishwoman.

'Then let Madame sacrifice le peigne à galerie! What sacrifice is it after all? Nobody wears them now; c'est d'un autre siècle,' argued Madame Alexandrine, appealing to me.

'This one was a present from my husband,' replied Mrs. Clifford, in a tone that seemed to say: you understand, there is nothing more to be said.

I did not dare look at Berthe. Luckily she was beside me so I could not see her face, but I saw the muff go up in a very expressive way, and suddenly she disappeared into a little salon to the left set apart for caps and *coiffures de bal*; I heard a smothered 'burst,' and a treacherous *armoire à glace* revealed her thrown back in an arm-chair, stuffing her handkerchief into her mouth and convulsed with laughter. Madame Folibel, whose risible faculties long and hard training had brought under perfect control, received the communication however with unruffled equanimity.

'That explains why Madame holds to it,' she answered, very seriously; 'c'est naturel et c'est touchant. Still, one must be reasonable; one must not sacrifice too much to a sentiment. Monsieur would not wish it,' turning to the gentleman, who stood with his back to the fire-place listening in solemn silence to the controversy.

'Monsieur understands that the chief point in Madame's toilette

is her bonnet. I grieve to say English ladies themselves do not sufficiently realize the supremacy of the bonnet; yet a moment's reflection ought to show them how all-important it is, how necessary that every other feature in the dress should succumb to it. The complexion, the hair, the shape of the head, are all at the mercy of the bonnet. Of what avail is a handsome dress, and fashionable shawl or mantle, costly fur, lace, an irreproachable tout ensemble in fine, if the bonnet be unbecoming? All these are but the *rez-de-chaussée* and the *entresol*, so to speak, while the bonnet is le *couronnement de l'édifice*. Le chapeau enfin c'est la femme!

At this climax Madame Folibel paused. Mr. Clifford, who had listened as grave as a judge, his hands in his pockets, and not a muscle of his face moving, while the modiste, looking straight at him, delivered herself of her *crédo*, now turned to me.

'Unquestionably,' he said, in a serious and impressive tone, 'there must be a place in heaven for these people: they are thoroughly in earnest.'

Mrs. Clifford took advantage of the *aparté* between her husband and myself to follow up Madame Folibel's oration by a few private remarks.

Clearly she was staggered in her fidelity to the 'sentiment' which interfered so alarmingly with the success of the *couronnement de l'édifice*; but she had not the honesty to confess it outright. She was ashamed of giving in. Without being often one whit less devoted to the vanities of life, an Englishwoman is held back by this kind of *mauvaise honte* from proclaiming her allegiance to them. She is ashamed of being in earnest about folly. Now this British

idiosyncrasy is quite foreign to a Frenchwoman; even when she is personally, either from character or circumstances, indifferent to the great fact of dress, she is always alive to its importance in the abstract, and will discuss it without any assumption of contemning wisdom, but soberly and intelligently as befits a grave subject of recognized importance to her sisterhood in the carrying on of life.

'What do you advise me to do, dear?' said Mrs. Clifford, appealing to her husband, the wife and the woman warring vexedly in her spirit.

'Give in,' said Mr. Clifford. 'What in the name of mercy could you do else? A dozen men in your place would have capitulated after that broadside ending in the woman and the bonnet.'

'What does Monsieur say?' enquired Madame Folibel.

Monsieur had answered his wife with his eyes fixed on the Frenchwoman, as if she were a wild variety of the species that he had never come upon before, and might not have an opportunity of studying again.

'I suppose I must sacrifice the comb,' observed Mrs. Clifford, affecting a sort of bored indifference, and looking about for her old bonnet, 'so we will leave the choice of the model open till I have had a consultation with Macradock, my maid, and see what she can do with my hair; she is very clever at hair-dressing.'

'Oh, de grâce, Madame!' exclaimed la Folibel, terrified at the rough Scotch name that boded ill for the *couronnement*, 'your maid instead of mending matters will only complicate them still more. You must put yourself in the hands of a *coiffeur* who understands physiognomy, and who will study yours before he

decides upon the necessary change. If Madame does not know such a man I can recommend her mine, a coiffeur-artiste in whom I have unlimited trust. I send him numbers of my pratiques, he never fails to please them, and I can trust him not to compromise me. Madame understands, the success of my bonnets depends in no small degree on the way in which the head is adjusted for them. Il y a des têtes impossibles that I could not commit my reputation to. I am sometimes obliged to make a bonnet for them, but I never sign it; I have my name removed from the lining, and so edit the thing anonymously. It would compromise me irremediably, if my signature were seen on some of your countrywomen's heads.'

Mrs. Clifford, awakened to the responsibility she was about to incur, promised to consult the artist instead of her Scotch maid, whereupon Madame Folibel handed her a large card which bore the name Monsieur de Rysterveld and his address. Under both was a note setting forth his capillary capabilities, and informing the public that:

'Monsieur de Rysterveld tient à prouver qu'il est possible de rester gentilhomme tout en devenant coiffeur.*'

The *modiste* then assisted Mrs. Clifford to tie on her own bonnet, observing while she smoothed out the ribbon carefully, as if trying to make the best of a bad case, 'I am glad that Madame has consented to give up that *peigne à galerie*, it really is an injustice to her head, and it is simply out of the question her having a *chapeau convenable* while that impediment exists. Madame will be quite another person,' she continued, addressing Mr. Clifford. 'Monsieur will not recognize her with a

new chignon, and in a bonnet of mine.'

'Oh, then I protest,' said Mr. Clifford, drily; he understood French, but did not speak it, 'I protest against both the chignon and the bonnet, Madame.'

'Plait-il, Monsieur?' said Madame Folibel, looking from one to the other of us.

'Dear Walter! She means I shall be so much improved,' explained his wife, laughing.

'Improved!' repeated Mr. Clifford, not lifting his eye-brows, but writing *incredulity* on every line of his face. His wife blushed, and her eyes rested on his for a moment. Then turning quickly to Madame Folibel she made some final arrangement about a meeting for the following day.

Just at this juncture Berthe came back. I was glad she was not there in time to catch the absurd little passage between the two. A husband paying a compliment to his wife, and she blushing under it after ten years' *ménage*, would have been a delicious morsel of the *ridicule anglais* that Berthe could not have withstood; it would have diverted her salon for a week.

'Well?' she said, five notes of interrogation plainly adding: 'Are you ever going to have done?'

'C'est décidé,' answered Madame Folibel, coming forward with an air of triumph, 'Madame sacrifices the comb!'

'A la bonne heure!' exclaimed Berthe; 'I congratulate you, chère Madame. Even au moral, you will be the better for it. For my part I know no *petite misère* more demoralizing than an unbecoming bonnet.'

We all went downstairs together; but at the street-door we parted from the Cliffords.

'Where are you going now?' asked Berthe.

* A fact,

'To the réunion at the Rue de Monceau,' I said; 'I got the faire-part last night, and I want particularly to be there to try and get a child into the Succursale school. There is only one vacancy and six are trying for it, so I fear my little protégée has small chance of success. Come and give me your vote, Berthe.'

'Chérie, I would with pleasure; but I am so dreadfully busy this afternoon; I promised la Princesse M—— to look in during the rehearsal chez elle, and then I've not been to Madame de B.'s jeudis for an age, and I almost swore I'd go to-day.'

'Well, what's to prevent your going afterwards,' I said. 'It's not yet four, and the réunion does not last more than an hour. Monsieur le Curé arrives at a quarter past four and leaves at five.'

'But one is bored to death waiting for him,' argued Berthe, 'and the room is so hot, chez les bonnes sœurs; and there won't be a cat there to-day, I'm sure; everybody is at the skating.'

'Oh! the parish and the skating don't interfere with each other,' I said, laughing; 'but I see you can't come; so, good-bye, I must be off. Mademoiselle de Galliac will be waiting for me.'

'Comment! Is la petite to be there? I particularly want to see her. I want to know how her snowstorm costume went off at the Marine, for in the crowd I never caught sight of her. Chère amie, I'll go with you to Monceau. After all,' she continued, drawing a long sigh, as we stepped into her carriage, 'this life won't last for ever; il faut songer de temps en temps à la pauvre soul.'

We were a little behind our time for the canvassing. Four of my rivals were before me in the field, and had robbed me of a few votes that I might have secured by

being there a quarter of an hour sooner.

'Now, Berthe,' I said, 'it's your fault; so you must bestir yourself to help me. Attack those young girls in the window, and persuade them to vote for my child.'

'Who are they?'

'I don't know; go and ask them.'

Berthe charged valiantly at the group in the window, introducing herself by embracing the young girls all round, and declaring her perfect confidence in their support. They gathered round her, fascinated at once by her beauty and her frank, attractive manner. I saw at a glance that the votes were safe, and that I had no need to bring up reinforcements in that quarter; so I set to work elsewhere.

Perhaps it would interest my readers to hear something of the *bonne œuvre* itself. Its object is to take charge of orphans of the poorest class, clothe, feed, and educate them till the age of twenty-one. The members are exclusively ladies, married or single. To be a member it is necessary to be a parishioner, to pay a small sum yearly for the maintenance of the confraternity, and to assist at the monthly meetings, where the wants, plans, and progress of the work are discussed in presence of the Curé, who is always president, and another parish clergyman elected *directeur*, the rest of the board, treasurer, secretary, and vice-president, being chosen amongst the members. When an orphan is proposed for admission, a written statement, giving her birth, parentage, and circumstances, and setting forth the special claims of the case, is placed on the green table of the assembly-room, at which the dignitaries preside dur-

ing the meeting. This preliminary fulfilled, the next step is to secure the votes of the confraternity. The demand being always much greater than the supply, when a vacancy occurs it is sure to be sharply contested. A zealous patroness takes care to canvass beforehand; but, from one circumstance or another, there are always a good many votes still to be disposed of on the day of the election, and the half-hour that elapses from the opening of the assembly to the arrival of the Curé is spent in fighting for them, and presents a scene of interesting excitement. The patroness is looked upon as the mother of the little petitioner, who, once admitted into the orphanage, is called her 'child.' Those who are long members, and very zealous, succeed in getting in many orphans, and thus becoming mothers of a numerous family. The most devoted of these mothers are generally the very young girls. The way in which some of their young hearts go out to their adopted children is touching and beautiful beyond description. They seem to anticipate the joys and cares, and to invest themselves with something of the very dignity of motherhood in their relations with the little outcasts, who look to them for help in a world where, but for them, they would apparently have no right to be, where no one cares for them, no one loves them, except the great Father who suffers the little ones to come to Him, and will not have them forbidden. Every month the *sœurs* send in a special bulletin of the conduct and health of each child, addressed to the adopted mother, and read by M. le Curé at the meeting. According to the contents of the bulletin the mothers are congratulated, or the reverse. Little presents are sent to the

good children, and letters of reproof written to the naughty ones. In this way the maternal character is kept up till the children leave the shelter of their convent home. Then the mothers assist in placing them as servants or apprentices, or, better still, in getting them respectably married.

While Berthe was gathering up votes for me on her side, I was busy on my own, and when the bell rang, announcing, as we thought, M. le Curé, I had a pretty good poll.

The buzz of talk subsided suddenly, the high functionaries broke away from the common herd, and took their places at the green table, near the *fauteuils*, awaiting the Curé and the Vicaire. Some of the very young mothers looked eager and flurried. One in particular, who was a rival candidate with me, seemed terribly nervous. She was about seventeen. Two juvenile mothers on either side of her were speaking words of encouragement, and trying to keep up her hopes.

'Tu as bien prié pour que je réussisse?' I heard her say to one of them; 'the poor old grandfather will break his heart if Virginie is refused. He can't take her into les Vieillards—even if it weren't against the rules—because he hasn't a crust of bread to give her. He has nothing but what the *sœurs* give him for himself. Oh! do pray hard that I may succeed!'

'Let us say another Pater and Ave before M. le Curé comes in,' suggested her companions; and the three friends lowered their voices and sent up their pure young hearts together in a last appeal to the Father of the fatherless in behalf of the little orphan.

The door opened. It was not M. le Curé.

'Ah! bon jour, cher ange!' ex-

claimed Madame de Bérac, embracing Berthe with effusion, and talking as loud as if she were 'receiving' in her own *salon*. 'What a charming surprise to meet you! I came to vote for Marguerite's *protégée*, and see how my *dévouement* is crowned!'

I expressed my satisfaction at virtue's proving in this case its own reward.

'But why have I not seen you before?' inquired Berthe. 'I did not even know you were in town.'

'I hardly know it yet myself,' replied Madame de Bérac; 'I only arrived last night. Marguerite wrote to me imploring me to be here if I could in time to vote for her. *Chère aimie*,' she continued, turning to me, 'till you reminded me of it I actually forgot I was member at all.'

'Well, now that you are in town, you mean to stay?' said Berthe.

'Hélas! I only remain a week.'

'But you said you meant to spend the Carnival here?'

'When I said so I believed it.'

'And what has changed your plans?' I inquired.

Madame de Bérac shrugged her shoulders.

'*Mon mari a l'indélicatesse de me dire qu'il n'a pas d'argent! One can't stay in Paris without argent.*'

'*Quel homme!*' exclaimed Berthe, with a look of pity and disgust.

The door opened again. This time it was the Curé.

After the usual blessing and prayer he declared the *séance* opened, and read the reports of the board and the bulletins. These matters disposed of, the business of the election began at once. A brisk cross-examination soon put four candidates *hors de concours*. Two had fathers who could support them, but wouldn't. The confraternity found the chil-

dren not qualified for its charge. Two others were not parishioners of St. Philippe du Roule. Of the six who had started, two, therefore, only remained on the field. One was mine, the other was the *protégée* of the young girl whose conversation I had just overheard. We were to divide the votes between us. Our respective orphans had the necessary qualifications; it only remained to see which of the two, as the more destitute, could establish the primary claim on the protection of the confraternity. Mine was ten years of age. She had two tiny brothers and a sister some five years older than herself, who, since the death of their mother, six months ago, had supported the whole family by working as a *blanchisseuse de fin* by day, and as a *lingère* half the night. But the bread-winner gave way under the load of work, and now lay sick at the hospital, while the brothers and the sister, clinging to each other in a fireless garret, cried out for bread to the rich brethren who could not hear them. The Curé de Sainte-Clothilde had promised to find shelter for the boys; but what was to be done with the girl? I had stated these plain facts in the petition, and now verbally recommended the case to the compassion of the members, and once again asked for their votes.

My rival's child was twelve years of age. She had no brothers or sisters. She was utterly destitute, but in good health, and nearly of an age to support herself. M. le Curé listened to the two cases, and when he had heard both, his judgment seemed strongly impressed in favour of mine.

In spite of the interest I felt in my poor little *protégée*, I could not help regretting the impending failure of my young competitor opposite. She had answered the

Curé's questions in short, nervous monosyllables, and now sat drinking in every word he said, two fever spots burning on her cheek, while her eyes swam with tears that all her efforts failed to swallow.

'To the vote, mesdames,' said the Curé; 'I fear Mademoiselle Hélène, you have a bad chance.'

'Oh, Monsieur le Curé!' burst from Hélène; 'her poor old grandfather will die of disappointment.'

'My poor child, I hope not,' said the Curé, evidently touched by her distress, but unable to repress a smile at this extreme horoscopic view; 'your *protégée's* having a grandfather is indeed an advantage on the wrong side.'

'He's blind, Monsieur le Curé! and paralysed! and eighty-six years old!' urged Hélène, gaining courage from desperation; 'and his one prayer is to see the petite safe, somewhere, before he dies. Oh, Monsieur le Curé! . . . She stopped, the big tears rolling down her cheeks.

'Voyons!' said the good old pastor, rubbing his nose and fidgeting at his spectacles; 'let us take the vote and then we shall see. You have a child already, have you not, Mademoiselle?'

'Yes, Monsieur le Curé, I have two, but one is in the country, at the Succursale.'

The votes were taken, and by a very small majority I carried it. My voters congratulated me, while Hélène's friends crowded round her, condoling. But the poor child would not be comforted; overcome by the previous emotion, and the final disappointment, she sobbed as if her heart would break.

'Oh, really it's too cruel to let that dear child be disappointed,' said Berthe; 'can't we do something, Monsieur le Curé? Can't

we, by any possibility, squeeze in another child?'

'Nothing easier, madame: you have only to create a new *bourse*, or get subscribers to the amount of three hundred francs a-year for the term of the child's education,' replied Monsieur le Curé.

'Then I subscribe for two years down,' said Berthe, impulsively. 'Who follows suit?'

'I do,' said another speaker; 'I will subscribe for one year!'

'And I will give forty francs,' said a third.

'And I a hundred,' said the Curé, who was always to the fore when a good work was to be helped on.

In a few minutes the green table glistened with gold pieces and notes. It was all done so quickly that Hélène had not had time to ask what it was all about when Berthe ran up to her with the good news that her child was taken in.

'How good you are, madame!' said the young girl; 'but I knew you were good; you have the face of an angel!'

'It is better to have the heart of one,' said Berthe, laughing, and hastily rubbing a dewdrop from her own fair face.

'Now I must make haste away, or I shall be late for my lesson,' said Hélène.

'What lesson are you going to take, ma petite?' inquired Berthe, affectionately.

'I am going to give one, madame,' replied Hélène; 'I live by giving music lessons.'

'Then you must come and give me some,' said Berthe. 'Here is my address. Come to me to-morrow as early as you can!'

'You are not sorry I made you come, are you, Berthe?' I asked, as we went out together.

'Sorry! I would not have missed it for the world.'

THE INFLUENCE OF FIELD SPORTS ON CHARACTER.

FIELD sports have been generally considered solely in the light of a relaxation from the graver business of life, and have been justified by writers on economics on the ground that some sort of release is required from the imprisoned existence of the man of business, the lawyer, or the politician. Apollo does not always lend his bow, it is said, and timely dissipation is commendable even in the wise; therefore by all means, let the sports which we English love be pursued within legitimate bounds, and up to an extent not forbidden by weightier considerations.

But there seems to be somewhat more in field sports than is contained in this criticism. The influence of character on the manner in which sports are pursued is endless, and reciprocally the influence of field sports on character seems to deserve some attention. The best narrator of school-boy life of the present day has said that, varied as are the characters of boys, so varied are there ways of facing or not facing a 'hilly,' at football; and one of the greatest observers of character in England has written a most instructive and amusing account of the way in which men enjoy fox-hunting. If, therefore, a man's character and his occupations and tastes exercise a mutual influence upon each other, it follows that while men of different disposition pursue sports in different ways, the sports also which they do pursue will tell considerably in the development of their natural character.

Now, the field sport which is

perhaps pursued by a greater number of Englishmen than any other, and which is most zealously admired by its devotees, is fox-hunting. It is essentially English in its nature.

'A foxhunt to a foreigner is strange,
'Tis likewise subject to the double
danger
Of falling first, and having in exchange
Some pleasant laughter at the awkward stranger.'

And it is this very falling which adds in some degree to its popularity; *suave mari magno*, it is pleasant to know that your neighbour A.'s horse, which he admires so much, has given him a fall at that very double over which your little animal has carried you so safely; and it is pleasant to feel yourself secure from the difficulties entailed on B, by his desire to teach his four-year-old how to jump according to his tastes. But apart from this delight—uncharitable if you like to call it—which is felt at the hazards and failures of another, there is in fox-hunting the keenest possible desire to overcome satisfactorily these difficulties yourself. Not merely for the sake of explaining to an after-dinner audience how you jumped that big place by the church or led the field safely over the brook, though that element does enter in; but from the strong delight which an Englishman seems by birthright to have in surmounting any obstacles which are placed in his way. Put a man then on a horse, and send him out hunting, and when he has had some experience ask him what he has discovered of the requirements of his new pursuit, and what is

the lesson or influence of it. He will probably give you some such answer as the following.

The first thing that is wanted by, and therefore encouraged by, fox-hunting, is decision. He who hesitates is lost. No 'craner' can get well over a country. Directly the hounds begin to run, he who would follow them must decide upon his course. Will he go through that gate, or attempt that big fence, which has proved a stopper to the crowd? there is no time to lose. The fence may necessitate a fall, the gate must cause a loss of time, which shall it be? Or again, the hounds have come to a check, the master and huntsmen are not up (in some countries a very possible event), and it devolves upon the only man who is with them to give them a cast. Where is it to be? here or there? There is no time for thought, prompt and decided action alone succeeds. Or else the loss of shoe or an unexpected fall has thrown you out, and you must decide quickly in which direction you think the hounds are most likely to have run. Experience, of course, tells considerably here as everywhere; but quick decision and promptitude in adopting the course decided on will be the surest means of attaining the wished for result of finding yourself again in company with the hounds.

Further, fox-hunting teaches immensely self-dependence; every one is far too much occupied with his own ideas and his own difficulties to be able to give more than the most momentary attention to those of his neighbour. If you seek advice or aid you will not get much from the really zealous sportsman; you must trust to yourself, you must depend on your own resources. 'Go on, sir, or else let me come,' is the

sort of encouragement which you are likely to get, if in doubt whether a fence is practicable or a turn correct.

Thirdly, fox-hunting necessitates a combination of judgment and courage removed from timidity on the one side and foolhardiness on the other. The man who takes his horse continually over big places, for the sake of doing that in which he hopes no one else will successfully imitate him, is sure in the end to kill his horse or lose his chance of seeing the run; and on the other hand, he who, when the hounds are running, shirks an awkward fence or leaves his straight course to look for a gate, is tolerably certain to find himself several fields behind at the finish. 'What sort of a man to hounds is Lord A——?' we once heard it asked of a good judge. 'Oh, a capital sportsman and rider,' was the answer; 'never larks, but will go at a haystack if the hounds are running.'

It is partly from the necessity of self-dependence which the fox-hunter feels, that his sport is open to the accusation that it tends to selfishness. The true fox-hunter is alone in the midst of the crowd; he has his own interests solely at heart—each for himself, is his motto, and the pace is often too good for him to stop and help a neighbour in a ditch, or catch a friend's runaway horse. He has no partner, he plays no one's hand except his own. This of course only applies to the man who goes out hunting, eager to have a run and keen to be in at the death. If a man rides to the meet with a pretty cousin, and pilots her for the first part of a run, he probably pays more attention to his charge than to his own instincts of the chase; but he is not on this occasion purely fox-hunting; and, if a true Nimrod,

his passion for sport will overcome his gallantry, and he will probably not be sorry when his charge has left his protection, and he is free to ride where his individual wishes and the exigencies of the hunt may lead him.

What a knowledge of country fox-hunting teaches? A man who hunts will, at an emergency, be far better able than one who does not to choose a course, and select a line, which will lead him right. Kinglake holds that the topographical instinct of the fox-hunter is of considerable advantage in the battle-field; and it is undoubtedly easy to imagine circumstances in which a man accustomed to find his way to or from hounds, in spite of every opposition and difficulty, will make use of the power which he has acquired and be superior to the man who has not had similar advantages.

Finally, fox-hunting encourages energy and 'go.' The sluggard or lazy man never succeeds as a fox-hunter, and he who adopts the chase as an amusement soon finds that he must lay aside all listlessness and inertness if he would enjoy to the full the pleasures which he seeks. A man who thinks a long ride to cover, or a jog home in a chill, dank evening in November, a bore, will not do as a fox-hunter. The activity which considers no distance too great, no day too bad for hunting, will contribute first to the success of the sportsman, and ultimately to the formation of the character of the man.

Fishing teaches perseverance. The man in 'Punch,' who on Friday did not know whether he had had good sport, because he only began on Wednesday morning, is a caricature; but, like all caricatures, has an element of truth in it. To succeed as a fisher,

whether of the kingly salmon, or the diminutive gudgeon, an ardour is necessary which is not damped by repeated want of success; and he who is hopeless because he has no sport at first will never fully appreciate fishing. So to the tyro, who catches his line in a rock, or twists it in an apparently inexplicable manner in a tree, soon finds that steady patience will set him free far sooner than impetuous vigour or ruthless strength. The skilled angler does not abuse the weather or the water in impotent despair, but makes the most of the resources which he has, and patiently hopes an improvement therein.

Delicacy and gentleness are also taught by fishing. It is here especially that—

*'Vis consili expers mole ruit sua,
Vini temperatam di quoque prorchunt
in majus.'*

Look at the thin link of gut and slight rod with which the huge trout or 'never ending monster of a salmon' is to be caught. No brute force will do there, every struggle of the prey must be met by judicious yielding on the part of the captor, who watches carefully every motion, and treats its weight by giving line, knowing at the same time—none better—when the full force of the butt is to be unflinchingly applied. Does not this sort of training have an effect on character? Will not a man educated in fly-fishing find developed in him the tendency to be patient, to be persevering, and to know how to adapt himself to circumstances. Whatever be the fish he is playing, whatever be his line, will he not know when to yield and when to hold fast.

But fishing like hunting is solitary. The zealot among fishermen will generally prefer his own company to the society of lookers-on, whose advice may worry him,

and whose presence may spoil his sport. The salmon-fisher does not make much of a companion of the gillie who goes with him, and the trout does best when absolutely alone; and nothing is so apt to prove a tyrant, and an evil one, as the love of solitude.

On the other hand, the fisher is always under the influence, and able to admire the beauties of nature. Whether he be upon the crag-bound loch or by the sides of the laughing burn of highland countries, or prefer the green banks of southern rivers, he can enjoy to the full the many pleasures which existence alone presents to those who admire nature. And all this exercises a softening influence on his character. Read the works of those who write on fishing—Scrope, Walton, Davy, as instances. Is there not a very gentle spirit breathing through them? What is there rude or coarse or harsh in the true fisher? Is he not light and delicate, and do not his words and actions fall as softly as his flies?

Shooting is of two kinds, which, without incorrectness, may be termed wild and tame. Of tame shooting the tamest, in every sense of the word, is pigeon-shooting; but as this is admittedly not sport, and as its principal feature is that it is a medium for gambling, or, at least, for the winning of money prizes or silver cups, it may be passed over in a few words. It undoubtedly requires skill, and encourages rapidity of eye and quickness of action; but its influence on character depends solely on its essential selfishness, and the taint which it bears from the 'filthy' effect of 'lucre.'

Other tame shooting is battue shooting, where luxuriously clad men, who have breakfasted at any hour between ten and twelve, and have been driven to their coverts in

a comfortable conveyance, stand in a sheltered corner with cigarettes in their mouths, and shoot tame pheasants and timid hares for about three hours and a half, varying the entertainment by a hot lunch, and a short walk from beat to beat. Two men stand behind each sportsman with breach-loaders of the quickest action, and the only drawback to the gunner's satisfaction is that he is obliged to waste a certain time between his shots in cocking the gun which he has taken from his loader. This cannot but be enervating in its influence. Everything, except the merest action of pointing the piece and pulling the trigger, is done for you. You are conveyed probably to the very place where you are to stand; the game is driven right up to you; what you shoot is picked up for you; your gun itself is loaded by other hands; you have no difficulty in finding your prey; you have no satisfaction in outwitting the wiliness of bird or beast; you have nothing whatever except the pleasure—minimized by constant repetition—of bringing down a 'rocketter,' or stopping a rabbit going full speed across a ride.

The moral of this is that it is not necessary to do anything for yourself, that some one will do everything for you, probably better than you would, and that all you have to do is to leave everything to some person whom you trust. Or, again, it is, get the greatest amount of effect with the least possible personal exertion. Stand still, and opportunities will come to you like pheasants—all you have to do is to seize them.

But it is not so with wild shooting. Not so with the man, who, with the greatest difficulty, and after studying every available means of approach, has got within

range of the lordly stag, and hears the dull thud which tells him his bullet has not missed its mark. Nor with him, who, after a hurried breakfast, climbs hill after hill in pursuit of the russet grouse, or mounts to the top of a craggy ridge in search of the snowy ptarmigan. Not so either with him, who traverses every damp bit of marshy ground along a low bottom, and is thoroughly gratified, if, at the end of a long day, he has bagged a few snipe, nor with him, who, despite cold and gloom and wet, has at last drawn his punt within distance of a flock of wild duck. In each of these, endurance and energy is taught in its fullest degree. It is no slight strain on the muscles and lungs to follow Ronald in his varied course, in which he emulates alternately the movements of the hare, the crab, and the snake; and it is no slight trial of patience to find, after all your care, all your wearisome stalk, that some unobserved hind, or unlucky grouse, has frightened your prey and rendered your toil vain. But, *en avant*, do not despair, try again, walk your long walk—crawl your difficult crawl once more, and then—your perseverance rewarded by a royal head; agree that deer-stalking is calculated to develop a character which overcomes all difficulties, and goes on in spite of many failures.

The same obstinate determination which is found in this, the *beau idéal* of all shooting, is found similarly in shooting of other kinds; and it is a question whether to the endurance inculcated by this pursuit may not be attributed that part of an Englishman's character which made the Peninsular heroes 'never know when they were licked.'

It is objected by foreigners to many of our national sports that

they involve great disregard for animal life. Let us go out and kill something, they say, is the exhortation of an Englishman to his friend when they wish to amuse themselves. Sport consists, they hold, in slaughter; sport therefore is cruel, and teaches contempt for the feelings of creatures lower than ourselves in the scale of existence. I do not wish to enter into this question, which has been a source of considerable controversy; but I would say three things in reference to it. First, that it is difficult to answer the question, Why should man be an exception to the rule of instinct—undoubtedly prevalent throughout the world—which leads every animal to prey upon its inferior? Secondly, that every possible arrangement is made by man for the comfort and safety of his prey—salmon, foxes, pheasants or stags—until the actual moment of capture, and that every fair chance of escape is given to it; and thirdly, that whatever the premises may be, the conclusion remains, that there is no race so far removed from carelessness of animal life and happiness as the English.

There are, however, other field sports which do not involve any destruction of life, and which, from the general way in which they are pursued, may fairly be called national. Foremost among these is racing.

Were racing freed from any influence, other than that which distinguished the races of past epochs, the desire of success; were the prize a crown of parsley or of laurel, and the laudable desire of victory the only inducement to contention, the effect on both the animals and men who are devoted to it could not be otherwise than for good. In modern racing, however, the ele-

ment of pecuniary gain comes in so strongly, that the worst points of the human character are stimulated by it instead of the best, and the improvement of horseflesh and the breed of horses, is sacrificed to the temporary advantage of owners of horses. To say, now, that a man is going on to the turf, is to say, that he had almost be better under it; and though a few exceptional cases are found, in which men persistently keeping race horses have maintained their independence and strict integrity in spite of the many temptations with which they are assailed, yet, even they, have probably done so at the sacrifice of openness of confidence and perhaps of friendship. Trust no one is the motto of turfites. Keep the key of your saddle-room yourself; let no one, not even your trainer, see your weights. Pay your jockey the salary of a judge, and then have no security that he will not deceive you. The state of the turf is like the state of Corcyra of old. Every man thinks, that unless he is actually plotting against somebody, he is in danger of being plotted against himself, and that the only safety he has lies in taking the initiative in deceit. The sole object is to win—

‘Rem

Si possis recte, si non quocunque modo rem.

Take care you are not cheated yourself, and make the most of any knowledge of which you believe yourself to be the sole possessor.

What is the result of such a pursuit? what its moral? The destruction of all generosity, all trust in others, all large mindedness; and the encouragement instead of selfishness, of extravagance, and of suspicion.

The man whose friendship was

warm and generous, who would help his friend to the limit of his powers, goes on the turf and becomes warped and narrow, labouring, apparently, always under the suspicion, that those whom he meets are trying, or wish to try, to get the better of him, or share, in some way, the advantages which he hopes his cunning has acquired for himself.

A thorough disregard for truth, too, is taught by horse-racing; not, perhaps, instanced always by the affirmation of falsehood, but negatively by the concealment or distortion of fact. An owner seldom allows even his best friend to know the result of his secret trials, and in some notable cases such results are kept habitually locked in the breast of one man, who fears to have a confidant, and doubts the integrity of every one. Whether this is a state of things which can be altered, either by diminishing the number of race-meetings in England, or by discouraging or even putting down betting, I have no wish to consider; but that the present condition of horse-racing and its surroundings is very far removed from being a credit to the country, I venture to affirm.

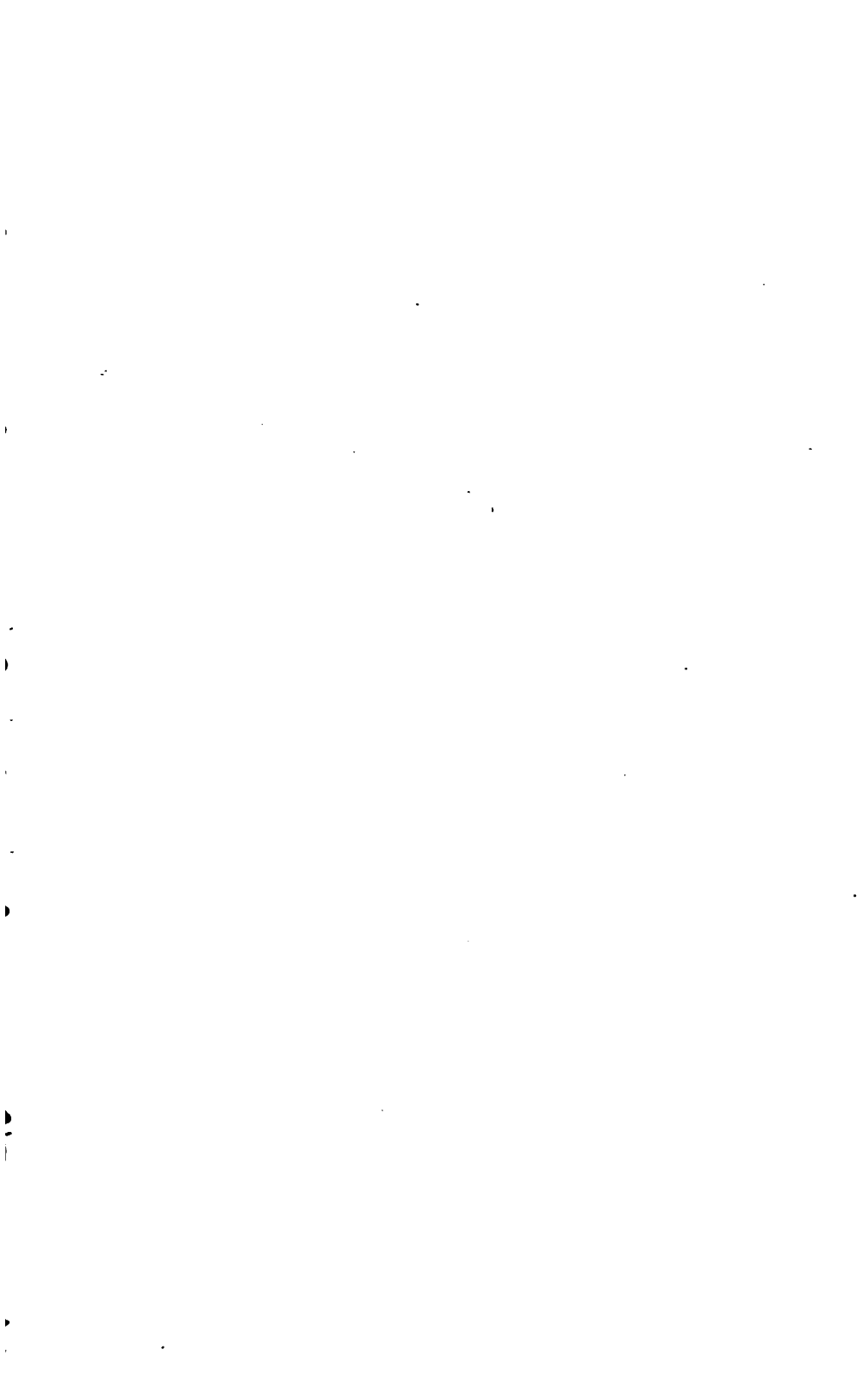
Cricket is another field sport the popularity of which is rapidly increasing; partly from the entire harmlessness which characterizes it, and leads to the encouragement of it by schoolmasters and clergymen, and partly from the fact that it is played in the open air, in fine weather, and in the society of a number of companions. I do not propose to inquire whether there is benefit in the general spreading of cricket through the country, or whether it may not be said that it occupies too much time and takes members away from other more advantageous occupations, or whether the combination of amateur

and professional skill which is found in great matches is a good thing; but I wish, briefly, to point out one or two points in human character which seem to me to be developed by cricket.

The first of these is hero-worship. The best player in a village club, and the captain of a school eleven, if not for other reasons unusually unpopular, is surrounded by a halo of glory which falls to the successful in no other sport. Great things are expected of him, he is looked upon with admiring eyes, and is indeed a great man. 'Ah, it is all very well,' you hear, 'but wait till Brown goes in, Smith and Robinson are out, but wait till Brown appears, then you will see how we shall beat you, bowl him out if you can.' His right hand will atone for the short-comings of many smaller men, his prowess make up the deficiency of his side. Or look at a match between All England and twenty-two of Clodshire, watch the clodsmen between the innings, how they throng wonderingly round the chiefs of the eleven. That's him, that's Daft, wait till he takes the bat, then you'll 'see summut like play.' Or go to the 'Bat and Ball' after the match, when the eleven are there, and see how their words are dwelt on by an admiring audience, and their very looks and demeanour made much of as the deliberate expressions of men great in their generation. Again, see the reception at Kennington Oval of a 'Surrey pet' or a popular amateur, or the way in which Mr. Grace is treated by the undemonstrative aristocracy of 'Lord's,' and agree with me that cricket teaches hero-worship in its full. What power the captain of the Eton or the Winchester eleven has, what an influence over his fellows, not merely in the summer when his

deeds are before the public, but always from a memory of his prowess with bat or ball. There is one awkward point about this; there are many cricket clubs, and therefore many captains, and when two of these meet a certain amount of difficulty arises in choosing which is the hero to be worshipped. In a match where the best players of a district are collected, and two or more good men known in their own circle and esteemed highly, there play together, who is to say which is the best; who is to crown the real king of Breatford? Each considers himself superior to the other, each remembers the plaudits of his own admirers, forgets that it is possible that they may be prejudiced, and ignores the reputation of his neighbour. The result is a jealousy among the chieftains which is difficult to be overcome, and which shows itself even in the best matches.

On the other hand, the effect of this very hero-worship which I have described, is to produce a harmony and unity of action consequent on confidence in a leader which is peculiar to cricket. Watch a good eleven, a good university or public school team, or the old A. F. P. for instance, and see how thoroughly they work together, how the whole eleven is like one machine, 'point' trusting 'coverpoint,' slip knowing that if he cannot reach a ball, coverslip can, and the bowler feeling sure that his half rollings, if hit up, will be caught, if hit along the ground, will be fielded. Or see two good men batting, when every run is of importance, how they trust one another's judgment as to the possibility of running, how thoroughly they act in unison. Such training as this teaches greatly a combination of purpose and of action, and a confidence in





Drawn by J. M. Ralston.]

"THE TROUBADOUR."—OLD STYLE.



J. M. R.

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"THE TROUBADOUR."—NEW STYLE.



the judgment of one's colleagues which must be advantageous.

The good cricketer is obedient to his captain, does what he is told, and does not grumble if he thinks his skill underrated: the tyro, proud of his own prowess, will indeed be cross if he is not made enough of, or is sent in last; but the good player, who really knows the game, sees that one leader is enough, and obeys his orders accordingly.

There are other points taught by cricket, such as caution by batting, patience and care by bowling, and energy by fielding; but I have no space to dwell on these, as I wish to examine very briefly one more sport, which, though hardly national, is yet much loved by the considerable number who do pursue it. Boating is found in its glory at the universities or in some of the suburbs of London which are situated on the Thames. It is also found in some of the northern towns, especially Newcastle, where the Tyne crew have long enjoyed a great reputation.

By boating, I do not mean going out in a large tub, and sitting under an awning, being pulled by a couple of paid men or drawn by an unfortunate horse, but boat-racing, for prizes or for honour. The Oxford and Cambridge race has done more than anything to make this sport popular, and the thousands who applaud the conquerors, reward sufficiently the exertions which have been necessary to make the contest possible.

The chief lesson which boating teaches is self denial. The university oar, or the member of the champion crew at the Thames or Tyne regatta, has to give up many pleasures, and deny himself many

luxuries, before he is in a fit state to row with honour to himself and his party; and though in the dramatist's excited imagination the stroke-oar of an Oxford eight may spend days and nights immediately before the race, in the society of a Formosa, such is not the case in real life. There must be no pleasant chats over a social pipe for the rowing man, no dinners at the Mitre or the Bull, no *recherché* breakfasts with his friends; the routine of training must be strictly observed, and everything must give way to the paramount necessity of putting on muscle. In the race itself, too, what a desperate strain there is on the powers! How many times has some sobbing oarsman felt that nature can resist no longer the tremendous demand made on her, that he can go on no longer; and then has come the thought that others are concerned besides himself, that the honour of his university or his club are at stake, and has lent a new stimulus and made possible that final spurt which results in victory.

The habits taught by boating, whether during training or after the race has commenced, lead to regularity of life, to abstemiousness, and to the avoidance of unwholesome tastes, and their effect is seen long after the desire for aquatic glory have passed away.

Such are some of the most prominent influences of English field sports, and as long as amusements requiring such energy, such physical or mental activity, and such endurance as fox-hunting, stalking, and cricket, are popular, there is little fear of the manly character of the English nation deteriorating, or its indomitable determination being weakened.

RECONCILIATIONS.

A Story.

D'ARCY, of Christ Church, asked me to come down and spend a month of the Long Vacation at his father's.

I wonder what made D'Arcy and me get on so well together. He was a tall, monastic-looking fellow; spent a good deal of time in an arm-chair at the 'Union,' reading; smoked much, and talked little; went in heavily for buying books with vellum bindings; was reputed to have turned one of his rooms into an oratory, and was known to have subscribed in a princely fashion towards a reredos. As for myself, I don't think that I had any other talent beyond a very decided one for amusing myself. Oxford taught me, as the ancient Persians taught their children, to ride, to shoot, and to speak the truth: unless, indeed, to dons and ticks—who are one's natural enemies—and pretty girls, who take kindly to perjuries. To these accomplishments I added the art of concocting sherry-cobblers, in the summer term, and all kinds of mulled drinks for the winter evenings. I don't know that Oxford taught me much else, although D'Arcy used to insist that Oxford could teach a good deal; and he certainly managed to get a double-first out of her teaching. I think he liked me on the anti-pathetic principle. My *persiflage* contrasted so much with his sober earnestness. I did not mind if he talked 'shop,' and I listened if he lectured. I was associated with him in hall and lecture; and our rooms were on the same staircase; and this led to the invitation.

So, one September afternoon, I found myself at the Burlington Road Station. My friend was in a dogcart with a pair of greys.

To my great satisfaction, he turned them in a contrary direction to cotton-spinning Burlington. We had nine miles to do through a perfectly sylvan country and at times even a wild country. We passed through a solitary village and by a few scattered farm-holdings. Then, through the lengthening vista of avenue, I saw the grey turrets of Dunster Hall. D'Arcy's father was one of our great estated squires, whose family might have been ennobled again and again, if they had cared for such a distinction, and his mother, Lady Eleanor, had been a wit and beauty in her time, and as she grew older, she proved a beautiful old lady, with her wit, tempered by excessive kindness, as lambent as ever.

I soon found that the house was more like an hotel than anything else. Visitors flowed into it, and visitors flowed out of it. It was just the same with D'Arcy as if he had been at Christ Church. A chat, a drive, a lounge, a walk—and the rest of the day he was with his books and papers. Before I had time to be dull, however, a special form of amusement developed itself.

'The country is pretty enough and truly rural, Lady Eleanor,' I said; 'but there is nothing very distinctive about the scenery.'

'You must go and visit the Glen, Mr. Adair. I will drive you over to-morrow, as far as I can. But do you care for fishing?'

'I like it very much, Lady Eleanor.'

'I ought to have told you about that, Frank,' said D'Arcy. 'Of course you might get capital fishing in the Nydd river. It flows through

a sort of gorge, which is the prettiest bit of scenery which we have in this part of the country, and where the gorge widens is what we call the Glen.'

'And when you are there,' said one of her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools, who happened to be staying in the house, 'you ought to go and see Lady Eleanor's model school. Ah, Lady Eleanor, you ought to put that school under government inspection. That clever, pretty governess of yours would give famous results.'

'She is a great deal too pretty and too good to be teased by an Inspector of Schools,' said Lady Eleanor. 'There was a poor woman who committed suicide the other day because she was told that her school was to be inspected.'

'Oh, Miss Lane has a great deal too much sense for that. If Mr. Adair goes to fish in the Glen, he ought certainly to see the Glen school.'

Mr. Adair had already amply made up his mind, not so much for the Glen, the fishing, or the school, as to see the pretty schoolmistress.

The next day was fine, and D'Arcy equipped me fully for fishing, and we started together. So he took me to the Glen. Now had that Glen been known by tourists, the beechen trees would have been carved by names, and seats of wood and stone would have been erected for the wondering admiration of visitors. But it was remote from all roads and rails, and red-covered 'Guides' had not made the name familiar. D'Arcy pointed out the place and then went back to his books, leaving me to my own devices. High up, hanging on the side of a hill three-quarters of a mile away, was a village, which, I rightly conjectured, furnished a contingent of scholars to the school. One end of the school formed a residence for the school-

mistress: a portico, that looked almost a bower from the clamoring roses that overspread it; the latticed window that, half opened, revealed a piano, some coloured prints, such as are issued by the illustrated periodicals at special seasons, and some pieces of sacred music.

Thus much I noted, as I passed out of the Glen, and moved towards the schoolroom door. Then I tapped with my stick, and entered. All the children rose up and made obeisances. A tall, graceful girl, dressed in white, with one simple rose in her bosom, fitting, sylph-like, among the children at the farthest end of the room, greeted me with a slight courtesy, which, for its grace, might have done credit to any gathering in the Faubourg St. Germain.

She was only about eighteen; a countenance of so much serenity, child-like beauty and simplicity I had never before seen. I greeted her as I would a duchess. I explained my call by saying that Lady Eleanor D'Arcy had asked me whether I would like to see the school. Miss Lane gave me all the details with as much fulness and frankness as if I had been her Majesty's Inspector of Schools himself, or the Bishop of the diocese.

'Would you like to read the Collect for us, sir? This is the hymn.'

She put into my hands 'Hymns Ancient and Modern,' and a large printed card with a form of prayer for schools. I was completely taken by surprise, and if I had had a minute for reflection, I should have replaced the card in her hand. But that minute was not granted to me. She rapidly seated herself at the harmonium, and in a second all the elder girls had grouped themselves around her. The little choir, evidently trained with great exactness, sang

very well, but the clear, sweet voice of the schoolmistress rose above all in the full melody. Then there was a pause: and, with much real diffidence, I discharged my clerkly functions. No naughty child that day could have been more discomposed than I felt then. The children now went away processionally, each bobbing her white head, as she defiled out. Then the room was cleared—left to the maps, and black-boards, and a perfect menagerie of painted animals on the walls with bits of description below them; and the schoolmistress came up to me with smiles and frank brow and her inimitable air of perfect simplicity.

I took advantage of that simplicity at once and put her through her paces, as if she were the tallest girl of Lady Eleanor's establishment. I asked her a set of questions, and she answered with the docility of a good child who had got the conduct prize in the first class.

'You are a very young schoolmistress, Miss Lane.'

'Not so very young, sir. I am nearly nineteen. But I was very young—not seventeen—when Lady Eleanor first put me here.'

'And how do you like it?'

'I like it very much, sir. Some of the girls don't get on as they ought. But they are very good girls, and no trouble. If we should be certificated, I hope they will work a little more.'

'And do you like reading?'

'Very much, sir. I always like to be learning something; and if I had more time I think I should study regularly.'

'And do you really live all alone?'

'Yes. And why should I not? At least, the pupil teacher comes early and stays till the end of the afternoon school. Then I am quite alone. But my sitting-room is very

pleasant. Will you come and sit down, sir? You must be rather tired after your walk from Dunster.'

It was as pretty a room as so pretty a girl could wish to have; in much the result of her own taste; but she explained that Lady Eleanor had furnished it, and had given her some pretty things.

Then I easily succeeded in extracting her little history from her. There was a boys' school at Collington—Collington was the village on the hill, every house of which and every inch of ground belonged to a great duke. Lady Eleanor had built this little school for a few neighbouring tenants on the D'Arcy estates, but the Collington children were free to come; and, despite the distance, they came in some numbers. This was partly to be attributed to the fact that Selina Lane was the only daughter of the only medical practitioner at Collington. He had died, leaving his child unprovided for, as I afterwards found out, and then Lady Eleanor had established her in this little school.

I asked Selina whether she did not think the river gorge exceedingly pretty. 'Oh! yes,' she said, 'immensely so.' She had sketched it herself in her own poor way; but there had been one or two good paintings of it, and she had heard of good judges of scenery who came many miles to see the gorge. Had I noticed the rock that, first seen in the distance, assumed the port of a lion? Had I observed the *Os-munda Regalis*? But I had observed none of these things. Then Selina arose, and put on her hat, and walked by my side along the stream, enthusiastically descanting on the beauty of the scenery. She evidently thought that it was part of the duty of the retainers of the great house to instruct all

visitors in the beauty of the gorge and glen.

We shook hands and parted. I went home, if not in love, still in as fair an imitation of love as can well be conceived. Henceforth I often sought the stream in the gorge. The ostensible object was fishing, and my takings were really not inconsiderable. Occasionally I had company—of the visitors who flowed through the Hall in a continuous strain of succession. Somehow I think I took some little pains that they should not pass beyond the wooden gateway, or prosecute any educational inquiries at the schoolroom. D'Arcy never came. He was occupied with his studies, and he was now nourishing an enthusiastic desire to join an expedition of a missionary, scientific, and exploring character in a region which we will call Patagonia. I could not help admiring D'Arcy, his enthusiasm, his earnestness, his genuineness. I now know that it was little indeed of these that I had then, or perhaps ever shall have.

After breakfast I would stroll off from the Hall with my fishing-tackle. I steadily reconnoitred the schoolroom. I could hardly venture to make many visits there. Allowing for the utmost educational ardour, it was hardly necessary that I should note the progress of the little community more than once a week. But I ventured to bring Miss Lane some books and music, and even some of the ferns that she had pointed out. Once I met her by the river-path, but she never again gave me the opportunity; twice by the gate; but I oftener saw her climb the steep hill towards Collington. It seemed as if she had detected my piscatorial tastes, and was steadily avoiding falling into the way of them. On one

occasion there was a large gathering to hear the bishop, and knowing that there would be a great number of people at church to meet that ecclesiastical potentate, I slipped away and managed a two-miles' walk home with Selina. At last I gathered courage, and asked her to walk in the evening, after school, by the stream; for I felt persuaded, and told her so, that this was her usual walk at this time. But, though she virtually admitted this, she would not walk with me. She had done so once, for hospitality's sake, to show the beauties of the vale. I had quite given up the attempt as hopeless, when one afternoon, on my repeating the request, she said, blushing to the eyelids, 'I don't mind walking with you, Mr. Adair.'

Before long I succeeded in making her confess how she had yielded to this request; that at first she had thought it wrong to do so, and then she bethought her how the village girls of Collington would walk on the evenings with young men, and why should not she do so, with whatever delight or wonder might belong to love-making. Why might not I walk with her even as other girls had those to walk with them, although I seemed other and better than all others? Thus much one evening with stammering and blushes; and I closed her lips with kisses.

She was only a village school-mistress, but in some sort of way she was a lady.

In my point of view this was an extremely pleasant interlude for the Long Vacation. It was better lines than I had thought for. I lingered on at Dunster Hall, and they were well pleased to have me. D'Arcy had passed his last examination, and if I did not care to go back to Oxford, that was

nobody's business but my own: D'Arcy knew that I had kept my terms. At last my friend had to go away to visit the proselytizing bishop who had inaugurated a wonderful scheme, a kind of Home Rule, for Patagonians, who should be left undisturbed in Patagonia, but should import a Prime Minister and an Established Episcopal Church from England or America. Now I had found out on the high road, a few miles from the Glen, a vast lonely hotel. Once it had been a great posting house on the northern road. Scores of coaches passed it daily. There was no other inn for miles on the moors. But things had altered. Two or three railways now intersected this part of the country, and the hotel was utterly deserted, stranded high and dry on the rocks like some hapless bark, save that in the fishing season it might interest some harmless Waltonians or stray tourists. Fortunately it belonged to the great duke, who took his loss with composure—the said loss being doubtless compensated by large gains—and he made it worth the landlord's while to live on there, although the business was gone, until the place should be turned into a sanatorium or lunatic asylum. The rooms were lofty and spacious, and so I took some of them, although the landlord rather resented this interference with that established deadness of trade on which he had begun to pride himself. And then I really let the time drift by me, as love-in-idleness. I brought a box of books down with me, and, in default of something else to do, I read ten times the amount I should have read at Oxford, and began to understand how D'Arcy might really like reading. But my great occupation in life, my great

thought in life, my great pursuit in life was Selina. There was a retired way through a wood a little distance from the hotel to the Glen, which eluded Collington observation. Selina made no secret now that she loved me with all her soul. Again and again we met in the Glen, and grew closer and closer to each other in the cleft of the huge rock as the autumn wind began to rise or the soft, thick rain fell a few inches from us untouched by it. But I had never asked what would be the end of all this. I only knew that it was pleasant to have Selina by my side, to clasp her hands, and to look steadily into her eyes until her lips drew close to mine. The idea of marrying her never entered my mind, for I was a younger son, of luxurious, self-indulgent habits, entirely dependent on the haughtiest of fathers. The time drew near that I must make a move, and it seriously struck me that I might do worse than get over the winter and spring in the south of France. How pleasant it would be if I could keep that sweet face beside me, if I had such a fair travelling companion along the Riviera. And I smiled bitterly and groaned at the impossibility.

But the devil put it into my heart, Why should it be an impossibility? Was such a hidden sweetness utterly beyond my reach? The devil put it into my heart one night, as we stood by the wicket, close to the school-house door. The light from her sitting-room gleamed cheerfully through the evening mists, heavy as still, soft rain. 'And won't you give a poor fellow leave to warm himself and a cup of tea, Miss Lane?' I asked. Never hitherto, since that first day, had I entered that maiden sanctuary.

Selina had an instinctive feeling that it was rather Lady Eleanor's possession than her own; a bashful sense that there was an impropriety in admitting a gentleman's evening visit while she thus lived alone. She hesitated a moment, and then led the way into her pretty room, which looked prettier than ever in the rich glow of the fire. I stood on the hearth and opened my arms. I knew I had only to open my arms, and she would nestle in them like a lured bird. She made me occupy her chair of state, and drawing her stool close by rested her arm on my knee.

'The glen is pretty enough, Lena, dearest,' I said; but, after all, England is the stupidest of countries in the winter. A few hours of railway, two of sea, and a couple of days, and we should come to another world.'

'And what is it like, Frank?' she asked. I had made her leave off calling me that everlasting Mr. Adair. I was Frank, her Frank, her darling Frank, her dearest—and all the rest of the old foolery.

'It is the loveliest land you have ever dreamed of, Lena: a deep sea, the bluest of blue waters, and far beyond the towering snowy mountains that will not chill, but will only love and protect you.'

'Ah! you are like that mountain, Frank, dear.'

'More like treacherous sand,' I might have said; but I went on quite otherwise. 'The most delicious of drives and boatings; groves of citron and orange, and tall palm trees, as if you were in Asia itself; and instead of freezing in a waterproof, as in England, your garden is full of flowers and the air full of birds; and there is an old château there which I know well, as large as Dunster Hall,

with turrets and battlements, and beautiful rooms which I know I could have for the next six months. Would you like to go there, my Lena?'

'Oh, it would be delightful,' and the innocent eyes glistened.

'Then come with me, Selina. Give the children their holidays a little earlier, and you shall see Italy with me.'

'But Lady Eleanor would never let the holidays begin before the usual time,' she said. 'And one can't be married all in a hurry, Frank,' she said, smiling, 'for I suppose it's that what you're really thinking about?'

'Oh, no. I don't mean *that*,' I replied. For a moment there was a wild look of terror and a sudden troubled gaze. I had heard, without looking, so absorbed had I been in our talk, some sounds at the doorway, but I had hardly spoken those fatal words when there came a heavy, impetuous rap with a riding-whip at the half-opened door, and D'Arcy stood before me. I started at the recognition, and said gaily, 'Well, D'Arcy, how are you, old fellow?'

He drew back with astonishment. 'Miss Lane, my mother asked me to call and leave you this letter.' And then, very gravely, 'This is an astonishment, Adair. Will you come up to the Hall and see me to-morrow?' 'All right, old man,' I said, and in a minute he was gone.

The note was from Lady Eleanor. It told Selina Lane that she had heard rumours of her walking about a great deal with a gentleman quite beyond her own class in society; that in her unguarded position she ought to be very careful, and she hoped she would make a friend of the writer, and come up to the Hall to talk matters over. Lena wept and was inconsolable. I knew that there was

just one way by which I could console her, but I did not take that way. What I did say made her kindle with astonishment and grief, and declare energetically that she would never see or speak to me again if I thus spoke. With great difficulty I was allowed to kiss and pacify the young beauty, and I went to my quarters wondering how I should brave it out with old D'Arcy in the morning.

I rode over the first thing next day. It has always been my rule to face disagreeables and 'have it out' with a man. D'Arcy soon joined me in the library, and in a lifeless way took my hand.

'I am glad to see you, as I am going to leave England, Adair, and possibly I may not see you again. I am going to join Bishop ——'s mission in South America.'

He named the place, a place of swamp, of yellow fever, of savagery, of destitution. I started back.

'How infinitely absurd of you, D'Arcy. Why, in the name of goodness, are you going out to South America? It is not as if you had your own way to make in the world. You are an elder son.'

'And I hope I shall long be an elder son,' said D'Arcy. 'I never wish to be anything more. There is no duty about here that my father does not discharge better than I could. If there is good work to be done in the wide world I must try and do it, even as others do, and I think that best.'

To me he was only talking gibberish.

Then came the row.

'It was not very kind of you to be in the neighbourhood and not come to see us.'

'You were away, D'Arcy.'

'But my mother, Lady Eleanor, was at home. She has been very anxious about her young school-mistress, whom she has always loved and befriended. You are at

the old game, Adair, flirting away and thinking of nothing but yourself.'

'Something of the sort, I expect.'

'If you have made her love you, do you mean to marry her?'

'I can't say that the idea ever occurred to me, D'Arcy.'

'Then I suppose you will go away and not give any further trouble?'

'No; I don't think I shall do so, either.'

'Frank Adair,' said D'Arcy, 'I must speak as plainly as possible. Do you think any of us could permit you to interfere with the happiness of a young girl who has my mother's friendship and protection? You have acted badly and basely as it is, but set the matter straight the best way you can; otherwise, Adair, we can never meet again as friends.'

The scene struck me at first as unutterably sad. The whole aspect of the park seemed to shift and alter, the very trees and landscape to reel, the very doors to grow strange and forbidding, and the whole familiar aspect of things to grow alien and frosted. To see D'Arcy, too—my beloved D'Arcy—for I now felt how his gentleness and power and learning had gained a wider influence over me than ever I had dreamed of—altered into another man altogether! There was an odd gleam in the eyes, a sarcastic curve on the lip, a haughty intonation in his voice, that struck me with astonishment and with dismay.

But I was certainly not to be moved by an alternative so sharply presented. I replied moodily and with rising passion.

'I am not to be dictated to, D'Arcy; I shall do exactly as I think fit in the matter.'

'Good morning, then,' said D'Arcy, and calling a man he said, 'Bring Mr. Adair's horse, and let

Lady Eleanor know that I wish to see her in her room, if I can.'

I went away without any leave-taking. When I next went near the schoolhouse it was closed for a vacation, and the schoolhouse was shut up. After some deliberation I resolved, greatly to the detriment of my Oxford creditors, to send Miss Lane a hundred-pound note, as compensation for the supposed loss of her situation. It was returned to me through the dead letter-office. I made one or two inquiries after her, but was never able to trace her.

I confess I was greatly annoyed when, a year or two after this, my father told me that I was to enter the Church. He did not actually tell me that I must, but he gave me clearly to understand that it was my interest to do so. I was not the eldest son, but then he was well able to give me a very fair patrimony for a younger son's portion. But one gloomy day there came the heavy crash of the failure of Overend and Gurney. My eldest brother had the entail, but the fortunes of the younger ones had vanished for the present until more could be saved out of the estates. There was the family living. My father had always wished that I should take it, but if I insisted on going to the bar or into the army, Cousin Frank would be very glad of it, or the old curate, who had grown grey in his office, would grow young again as rector. There was my home for me, but he would only allow me two hundred a year now. If he were spared for a few years he might be able to leave me as much or even more for life. But he could positively assure nothing but the living, and I ought to qualify for it, as the life of the present holder would probably shortly drop. It seemed to me a

dreadful grind; but on looking into matters more closely they were not so terrible after all. I belonged to two or three clubs already, and in a year or two I should be a member of the Athenæum. I might easily obtain a title in the diocese of London, and though the examination was difficult, yet having bagged a couple of honoraries, that is to say, having been lifted against my will out of the ruck of passmen into the honorary fourth class, I thought I might tackle the papers. I did not then think that in taking orders there was anything more to be tackled than the papers, an illusion out of which one is very soon forced to awaken. I secured a delightful curacy in the West End. I had nothing to receive; but then, on the other hand, there was nothing to do unless I chose. My incumbent was one who delighted to see a row of curates with their hands decorously folded, and clad in spotless surplices. I might intone the Litany whenever I happened to feel equal to that exertion; I was privileged to address the children, and servants, and the few old ladies who would constitute our average afternoon congregation.

I stayed at a capital hotel while I was being examined at a grand old episcopal palace, whose diocese is left unnamed. London, I may say, is shared, though unequally, among four dioceses. Then I went into my modest rooms, which served me well enough with a skilful combination of my clubs. I believe there are clergymen who will fret and worry their lives away in their parishes, or stay in their studies half a day elaborating their discourses. That, certainly, was not my plan. I belonged to a set of men who knew how to take the sunny side of human life. I was presented at court, fre-

quented the opera, was visible on the best days at the Botanic Gardens and the Horticultural, joined in little dinners at Greenwich and Richmond, got up little whist-parties, and without quite liking the clerical life, nevertheless made it very endurable. Sometimes I went to evening crushes, but gave a decided preference to the excellent dinner-parties which were given in our decidedly aristocratic parish.

But I confess I was not quite happy or satisfied. Often, even in my dreams, the sad, grieved beauty of Selina Lane reproached me—often the half-cutting and all-contemptuous look of D'Arcy pierced me through. Goldsmith has a famous line how 'fools that came to mock remained to pray.' But I thought that the man who read prayers might himself be a fool. Somehow even the very sermons, purchased as if they were a quack medicine, as in a sense they were, at a shilling penny halfpenny apiece, seemed to be directed against myself. There was something in that daily morning and evensong, something in the music and the echoes and the dim religious light, something in the words and aspects and the worshipping crowds that gradually penetrated my very soul. I think I was kindly and well-disposed towards people, loving the æstheticism of religion, and sometimes I would give very good advice to the choristers and the singing-men. But somehow there was ever a deep reproach in my own soul. What was the use of walking harmlessly and irreproachably when there was no temptation to do otherwise, when every incitement was to the side of decorousness and respectability? People thought me a good man, spoke of me as a good man, but my conscience told me that my strength had been tested once for

all in one supreme trial and had given way; that I, who so volubly invited sinners to repent, had tried hard to tempt an innocent being into sin, and had certainly drawn her into deep sorrow; and my cheek would tingle, and I would stamp down my foot with rage as, amid the quickening sense of my responsibilities, and the growing seriousness of life, my own conscience branded me as a hypocrite.

Our senior curate was a tall gaunt man who came from some theological college in the north, and who had scanty social gifts to atone for the want of Oxford culture. But I could not help observing that his face would lighten up with a divine rapture as the sunset glow fell upon it during evensong; that whereas I never took evening duty unless it came to me in rotation, he was never absent; and that whereas I looked upon my profession as a kind of extra to my usual life, a sort of *πάρεργον*, his own whole life was dedicated to his sermons and active duties. I only wrote two or three sermons, brief and bare, but I discovered that I possessed a kind of talent for social and satirical sketches, and found it much easier to write a biting essay than an edifying discourse. At first I took to the employment for the mere joy of excoxiating people, and I confess that my sketches were a little personal, and I was twice cut by some friend at the club in consequence. But as cheques, not despicable in amount, kept flowing in on the quarter days, I was not displeased with the sense of profit as of power. If a friend chose to cut me the world was wide, and I might at any time pick up a dozen acquaintances for any one that I had lost. But as for acquaintances I did not care for them. I had them by hundreds; indeed I was almost a by-word for a man of the world

with many friends. But friends, in truth, I had none. I longed for those old days when D'Arcy and I had rooms on the same flight in quad, when we would spend day after day in free-spoken careless intercourse. I felt now how much I owed him, how much I loved him; and as for happiness, there was nothing that in this rich, varied London life that equalled the wild happiness with which I first drew Selina to my bosom, and heard her sobbing confession that she loved me.

I do believe that gaunt senior curate, Dobbs, looked upon me as little better than those metropolitan heathen, whom I was popularly supposed to be elevating and enlightening. I do believe that he cultivated my acquaintance with some dark design of elevating the tone of my mind, or something of that sort. He would put down some new theological work on the table loaded with novels and periodicals, not to mention gloves and foils, and beseech my best attention to the last brand new heresy of the day, with which I was sure to express much sympathy. Also he ran his eye, more pityingly than enviously, over the great cards of invitation which I had thrust into the glass over my mantelpiece. Dobbs knew something—that is to say, for a raw outsider—of the charmed inner circle of a Londoner's life. He looked approvingly on the cards for the learned societies, thought there were too many of the dancing and dining kind; and the more I talked to him of my club life, the less he liked it. I told him that as I had nothing for my curacy I did not feel called upon to work much, but that I should prove a *divine* sort of fellow as soon as I dropped into the fat family living, for the avowed sake of which I had donned the 'cloth.' Dobbs argued against

this, and not unkindly, for he evidently liked me. Dobbs rather reminded me of D'Arcy in his simplicity and goodness, but without that inimitable grace, courtesy, wit, and wisdom of D'Arcy—D'Arcy, who was sacrificing his rare gifts to those unappreciating Patagonians. He exhorted me to take more interest in my work. 'Go and see some of the poor. Talk as naturally to the people in the pulpit as you quiz them in the "Spatterclay." Take some hopeless chronic case of illness, and watch it all through, from first to last; that will be a good apprenticeship to your *life-work*,' said Dobbs, using that expression with a solemnity that I did not much care for. He could make every allowance for a man who had the misfortune to be an Honourable as well as a Reverend. 'But really, old fellow, if it is worth while being a parson at all, you ought to carry out the idea a little more.' So argued Dobbs; and in a weak moment, prompted by various compunctious visitings, I promised Dobbs that I would practically adopt his line of argument. Dobbs said he had to go down at Christmas into the country, to visit his old father, and if I would only take a share of his more pressing cases, he would go with an easier mind, and be able to stay for a longer period with his dad. Being good-natured—which was my solitary virtue—I assented, and Dobbs went off, pacified, to the wilds of Northumberland, leaving with me a list of such of his duties as now fell to my lot unequally to discharge.

My increased share in the daily services I conscientiously went through. Indeed, by this time I had quite developed a taste for church music, and took a positive delight in training the choir. But eleven days of Dobbs's Christmas

vacation had elapsed before I thought of that ominous list of rich and poor. The poor, indeed, had not been neglected, for my housekeeper had orders to deal out the customary doles, with an added amount for the sake of Christmastide. The cases being of a Christmas kind—that is to say, rheumatism or lumbago being the predominant type—I took things quietly. But as I dressed to go out for dinner on Christmas Eve, my conscience pricked me sore as I saw Dobbs's memorandum lying on my dressing-table, and I crammed it into my waistcoat pocket, vowing that I would attend to it as soon as Christmas Day was fairly past. Then in amid the glancing lamps, and in the frosty air, I stepped into a Hansom and was whirled away to my Christmas-Eve party. Shall I ever, gracious Heaven, forget that Christmas Eve?

The dinner was progressing towards a prosperous termination, when a note was slipped into my hand. It had been sent from Dobbs's house to mine, and the housekeeper had thought it best to send it on. 'Mrs. Merton's cousin is much worse, and would like to see Mr. Dobbs.' I quietly referred to my memorandum, and there I saw among the Christmas cases, 'that case at Mrs. Merton's, 15, Paradise Row,' with three asterisks, which I had unfortunately overlooked, but which I now thought to denote importance or urgency. I only stayed a few minutes to operate on the back of a pheasant, and drain another glass of champagne. I would pacify my conscience by going at once to see this case, and would come back as soon as I could. I made my excuses, on the ground of an urgent case, which were courteously received; and as I left the room I thought I heard some one murmur,

'Excellent young man,' which I took to myself with much complacency, as a thoroughly deserved compliment.

Paradise Row was not far off. It was, indeed, in my district, but I had never ascended any steps, or knocked at any door. Externally it was a street of neat, substantial, and even large-sized tenements; but I knew enough of London that although the building might only suffice for one well-to-do family, yet it was probably the habitation of a whole set of families. There was a row of three bells at the address given—a smaller number than usual—and an unusual neatness about the place. Mrs. Merton came to see me—a decent-looking Londoner, with a careworn look. I noticed that the place seemed full of flowering plants, and there was a sound of birds—indications of the frequent country tastes of poor Londoners. Her cousin once removed had been staying with her for seven or eight months, and had seen one or two great doctors; but London did not agree with her so well as the country. They did not come to our church; but as they lived in our parish, and as they had heard that Mr. Dobbs was such a very good gentleman, she had sent for him. Her niece might not live very long, she had need of comfort, and ought to see a clergyman. Mrs. Merton was sorry that Mr. Dobbs—of whom she evidently had a high opinion, which she did not extend to all the cloth—was away, but perhaps another clergyman might do as well. Then she opened the door of an adjacent apartment, and there, in a poor room, with a few faint signs of elegance about it, the suppleness of frame gone, the roundness of face and chin gone, but with cheek and eye brighter than ever, but with a fatal brightness, lay poor Selina Lane.

When she saw me, she gave a short, quick scream, and stretched out her arms wildly. 'Oh, Frank, dearest! at last—at last!' Then she fell back, fainting, and there was a scarlet stream at her lips.

The motherly Mrs. Merton was astonished, as she might be. For myself, I was in the highest degree deeply moved. Mrs. Merton supported the head of the sufferer, and told some one to run for a doctor. I did what I could, which was little or nothing; but I took her hand, whispering, 'Selina, darling, you must lie very quiet, and not speak a word till the doctor comes.' She only gave me a look—ah! a look that at this moment thrills my whole soul!—and clasped my hand. Evidently she did not associate me with the clergyman who had been sent for, but evidently thought that I had sought her out and found her. I certainly felt my position most embarrassing. Thus it is that our old follies find us out, and a forgotten past confronts us.

I had heard the name of a physician mentioned whom I knew to be one of the greatest men in his profession, and I presently went off to him, and was able to bring him back with me. Mrs. Merton waited for him, and I accompanied him home. He took the fee I proffered him, too accustomed to surprises, perhaps, to be surprised. He had seen the other medical gentleman, he said—a small general practitioner, who kept a druggist's shop round the corner—and the case was clear. They had stopped the hæmorrhage, which was not so alarming as might be thought, by an application of ice. It was not a case of which he could speak at all hopefully. In the ordinary course the patient would die, and before very long; but if you could altogether improve her general health, her life might be indefinitely

prolonged. She had evidently been suffering a good deal from mental causes. 'It seemed a very hard thing to say,' added the doctor, 'but it belonged to that class of cases in which rich people lived, and poor people died. Only let the pretty young lady leave her poor lodgings, and avoid the rigours of the English winter now upon us, and make her calm and happy in mind, and surround her with comforts and kindness, and she might have a new lease of life. Otherwise, the case would run its ordinary course.' And here the doctor shrugged his shoulders.

That night I could not sleep.

Again and again I paced my chamber. Most restlessly I moved about. I was unable to slumber; I was forced to think. And if you marry that girl—so struggled my thought into expression—just think what you will be doing. I recognized that during the still hours of this sleepless night, that great question of my life must be debated and settled. It was a question that affected two lives. Considerations of time and of eternity belonged to those fast-fleeting minutes. And if you marry that girl, said one voice—the voice of prudence, and secularism, and the world—your London position is irretrievably gone. You become thwarted and clogged in life at one of its main turning-points. You will have to give up your curacy, and your father may be so offended that you may lose your living. You made a youthful error, which may be looked upon as condoned and forgotten, and you were willing to offer what retribution you could. The girl shall be removed, and have doctors, and nurse, and change of air, and comforts to the two-thirds of your substance. More than that you cannot do.

But another voice replied: All

these, with your love, might heal her; and without your love she would only pine and die. She has loved but you, and truly you have seen none whom you have so loved as her. Your money perish with you; she would not touch it. You wrecked that young bright life. Heaven, in its mercy, permits you to make some retrieval of your selfishness, and, with a practical atheism, you refuse to make it. O man of God—if such in any sense you are—what a hardened hypocrite you will ever be to preach love and mercy, when you have refused to learn the very alphabet of such lessons! You are summoned in the Master's name to see the sick, and you see one whom you have well nigh slain by your selfishness, and this one, lying by the wayside worn and bleeding, you do not seek to heal, but strike through and through again. Be true to your better nature. Be able to look heaven in the face, and unblushingly serve its altar. Fling cowardly social fears aside. You are at least a man, and can work for those you love. And so the two voices, in strophe and anti-strophe, rose and fell, this way and that dividing the swift mind; but somehow the balance seemed to incline in favour of the latter voice, and as the window-pane began to glimmer in the Christmas dawn, I slept at last.

I slept: and, so sleeping, I dreamed dreams, and saw visions. Somehow my memory seemed to travel back to the old days of Oxford life, with D'Arcy. I seemed to be sitting by the fire-light in his room one winter's afternoon, waiting for hall. I used to delight to find D'Arcy in his room between the lights. I might have come from rowing, and at the banks have talked my full share of such talk as was

then at vogue amongst us oarsmen. D'Arcy, every second day, would walk or row by himself, and his rule was to do a little reading before 'hall.' He would always lay down his books as I came in, and would generally have something to say about what he had been reading. He was good enough to say that I always took it all in. Was it memory, or fancy, or association, that in my dream I was sitting in the doubtful light, and D'Arcy was speaking in that low serious tone which he used at times, though seldom? 'You are perfectly insatiable of amusement, Frank,' he said. 'You may fling away your degree if you choose, but you cannot fling away your activity of mind, that must find some *pabulum* or other. And I fear for you, my friend, lest you should turn out an *akolastos*'—that delicate phrase in old 'Totle (short for Aristotle), that indicates a man must needs go to the bad.

I awoke feverishly, and again I slept and dreamt.

It was D'Arcy again. The time seemed to be a time very near the Christmas vacation. We were taking our last turn in the Broad Walk. On the trees some dying leaves were still fluttering, and in the west some faint lights were still flushing. I was talking about some pretty girls whom I was to meet at Blenheim Park, and using one or two names rather too freely. 'Well, old fellow,' said D'Arcy, with a smile, 'I have never been, thank heaven, in love yet, as you call it, but I daresay my time will come. If ever it does I hope I shall be able to speak with a little more feeling and respect about the damsel, than you fellows seem to do. You are like children, thinking you are only in fun, but playing with fire, steel, or poison. I wouldn't

profane my whole life, if I were you, Adair. Try and keep some little corner of it sacred.' Then we had our usual badinage, meeting jest with earnest, and earnest with jest; but D'Arcy's thoughtful face and gleaming eyes were still fully bent towards me till the second in which I awoke.

Once more I slept, and D'Arcy ruled my dream.

My inner eye awoke on a most strange scene, unlike aught that I had ever seen before. There was a wild wilderness outspread around, crowned with rugged tors of large number and variety. Beyond this there was a confusion of tumbled hills, the taller peaks being white with snow. A low water, around which was vegetation dank and dense. A coarse pavilion was here stretched out, and in the interior, on a cushion, lay D'Arcy, apparently weak and ailing. A few books and mathematical instruments were near at hand. I dreamed that I drew near to him, and took his hand in mine. Somehow neither of us seemed to feel the slightest surprise at our meeting thus strangely. 'Ah, Frank,' he said with his old sweet smile, 'I shall have to play Mentor to your Telemachus till the end of the chapter. It is only the old advice, 'Do justice—love mercy—walk humbly.' 'I have tried to do justice and mercy,' said I, almost moved to tears. 'I know it, dear old fellow,' he said, and then his arm was flung across my shoulder, and I felt that I leaned my head upon his breast. What followed I know not, but I awoke with a mighty sob, and my eyes were wet with tears; for days I was vividly impressed with that thrice repeated dream.

I have no faith in any science of dreams, nor do I venture ordinarily to lay the least stress upon them. It was not till some months later that I knew D'Arcy died this very Christmas Eve of jungle fever in South America.

I need not go more fully into this history, nor tell how Selina, finding life intolerable and unhappy, had come up from the country to London in broken health and spirits, to find her only remaining relation. We were married at Torquay, and Dobbs married us. Later I took my wife to the south of France, and afterwards to Italy. Her fragile, delicate loveliness perhaps surpasses her youthful beauty, but it often gives me a pang, as I think how it was that I had replaced the roses by the lilies. The great physician tells me that her life may be prolonged for years, but its tenure is uncertain, and for my delicate boy the future days are doubtful. My father has long since been reconciled to me through the best of mothers—through the charm of my wife's nature—and I think I may add, by the evidence clearly given, that I have been roused from lethargy to work in earnest. I am afraid that they think me a sad absentee from my great living, but Selina is ever my chief care, for I know the preciousness of my treasure and the perilousness of its tenure. Ours is a life-long reconciliation; I know that I am beloved and forgiven. I venture to believe that my dear lost friend and I are reconciled till we meet again. Best of all, I am reconciled to my own conscience—to life, to work, to heaven!

GLIMPSES OF A WHITE WORLD.

BY HENRY BLACKBURN.



LOOKING down upon one of those beautiful '*relief*' maps of Switzerland, made by Edward Beck, of Bern—where the hills and valleys and lakes are so accurately modelled that it is like a glimpse of a real world—tracing, as the Swiss tourist may do, his walks of a previous summer, the spot where he chose to rest on the lake of Geneva or Lucerne, the new route up Mount Pilate, the path to the Eagle's Nest, or his track round Mont Blanc—there yet, perhaps, remains to him unexplored a vast mysterious region of ice and snow, whence two great rivers of Europe find their way to the sea.

We say 'perhaps,' because to many of us this upper world is

becoming as familiar as the highlands of Scotland, and the Alps are but a part, and the best part, of the play-ground of Europe. Enthusiasm for mountain-climbing and a love of adventure are so natural to us, that there is nothing extraordinary in seeing the Charing Cross railway-station, during the month of August, filled with crowds of tourists, of all ranks and ages, on their way to Switzerland.

But to the majority of Englishmen, and even to those who have spent many summers by its blue waters, or in *châlets* 5,000 feet above the level of the sea, the high alps and the institution of the 'Alpine Club' are unravellled mysteries. Between the quiet, un-

obtrusive, and sometimes shabby-looking men with suits of tweed, worn knapsacks, and mysterious bundles of sticks strapped together, and the young ladies with 'Dolly Varden' hats and white alpenstocks, branded with the names of 'Rigi,' 'Gemmi,' and 'Tête Noir,' there is a distance in their aims and objects as wide as the poles.

The readers of 'London Society' have had the popular and well-worn routes—the regular Swiss round, as it is called, so well described in these pages—that there is little more to be said; but the mysteries of the upper world, the doings of the 'Alpine Club' and their select following, have only been revealed to a few.

The party of Swiss tourists that start together from the London terminus will part company at Baale or Lucerne, only to meet once or twice on a Sunday during a tour of six weeks. When Paterfamilias and his enterprising daughters, who have been ascending a mountain all day, arrive at last at some chalet or hostelry—built, as it appears to their unaccustomed and delighted eyes, almost in the sky—the first people they will meet at the frugal supper of kid and rough red wine will be some 'men,' compatriots, most probably, who have come down to the same place for a day's rest, and to enjoy the luxuries of civilization. It is like the meeting of two distinct races, with few ideas and little language in common.

To the uninitiated there is a halo of mystery about the proceedings of 'Alpine men' that few will attempt to unravel. The fact is that these gentlemen, in the course of a summer tour, go into considerable danger and suffer hardships sometimes very real and terrible; they meet in London afterwards, dine together periodically, and relate their experiences in a journal,

the last number of which is before us.* Whether a love of excitement and adventure predominates over the professed scientific aims of the Club, and leads the members beyond the bounds of prudence, our readers will be able to judge by the published accounts of their adventures; but accustomed as we have been from time to time to read the reports and learn the results of the scientific explorations of foreign societies, we cannot help being struck with the rather sensational aspect of the contents of the 'Alpine Journal.' Bearing in mind that, after all, the aim and object of the Alpine Club is not an idle one, and that many of its members are doing good service in extending our topographical and geological knowledge, we cannot but think that too much prominence is given to feats of daring, and that a love of adventure is fostered beyond reasonable limits. Thus the prominent article in the present number, called 'A Race for Life,' gives an account of the narrow escape of a party who were ascending the Eiger (a mountain familiar to all visitors to Grindelwald)—'a wild confusion of whirling snow and fragments of ice'—sweeping down the mountain, an avalanche passing within a few yards of the rocks on which they had hastily clambered for refuge.

Amongst the most interesting papers read before this society are the notes of foreign travel and exploration; and the *least* interesting, the record of 'Alpine accidents' of the past year. In the 'reviews' of books we find Mr. Dixon's 'Switzers' rather severely handled, and his knowledge of the Upper Alps called in question; and in the printed record of 'Pro-

* 'The Alpine Journal: a Record of Mountain Adventure and Scientific Observation.' London: Longmans, May, 1872.

ceedings' we find, amongst much valuable information, one remark which, if not a printer's error, is certainly rather astounding:—

'Mr. Tuckett, referring to a remark of Mr. Moore, that almost every imaginable pass out of Zermatt had now been made, observed that there *might be reason to hope* that, in consequence of the oscillations of temperature in the Alps, *certain passes, now easy, might in course of time become difficult!*'

The purely holiday, or romantic, aspect of mountain-climbing, is characteristically depicted by a member of the Alpine Club in an article, published only a few days ago. He is dreaming of the delights of Switzerland—'thinking of the pleasures of the season past,' and enjoying 'the rapture of anticipation, after an enforced absence from its glories and its joys.' 'Before me,' he says, 'lie two little torn shreds of faded red bunting. They formed portions of the remnants of the flags erected upon the summits of the Jungfrau and Monte Rosa. The stuff is thin and sere as the sails of the doom-struck ship of the ancient mariner, and the colour is now very faint and wan. Think how long these flags have waved or drooped, by night and day, through summer and through winter, through stillness and through storm, on the lonely and lofty peaks of those awful summits! As in the dim aisles of some old cathedral the tattered banners droop and wave no more, so these torn patches of the Jungfrau and Monte Rosa flags now droop for ever in my London room.'

Following him to the Alps—

'On mountain standing
Up in the air, crown'd with the golden
sun,'

he describes with a certain graphic power and with scarcely any exaggeration, the ascent of the last *arête* on Monte Rosa, the traffic

on which seems to be increasing rapidly every summer!

The following gives a clear idea of the nature of the work in ascending this mountain.

'The *arête* slopes steeply upwards. It is a knife-edge of frozen snow, with fearful depths on either side, and out of this edge rise huge blocks and bulks of sharp or round or saw-edged rocks, over which you have to climb, descending from them again and again on to the ridge of snow. We found a tolerably strong wind, and we found also that the rocks were coated with fresh snow, and covered with a varnish of thin ice. On one hand a nearly vertical wall descends to the Monte Rosa glacier, while on the other a snow slope of perilous incline falls away deep, deep down to the Görnérhorn glacier. This ridge of hard snow between the rock masses is often literally as sharp as a knife-edge. We move slowly, one at a time. We have discarded spectacles, and I find it impossible to hold on with worsted gloves. I take them off, and get, in consequence, two fingers frost-bitten; but still without gloves I can hold on the ice-covered rocks, and with gloves I cannot. I find it best to look only from one step to the next. I *totally disregard the view*. Scarcely a word is spoken, as it is a place which tests steadiness and endurance to the very utmost; and yet in such a climb consists the most joyous excitement of the Alps. After rather more than two hours of this real climbing we reach the high rock, smooth, slippery, and ice-shining, of the final *cheminée*. Suddenly, while climbing and struggling, looking only to my footsteps, the guide seizes my hand, and cries, "Herr, you are on the top of Monte Rosa!" And so we have really done it, and are actually on the very top of the second moun-

tain in Europe! about 15,300 feet above the level of the sea.'

The end accomplished, and the mountain descended, the travellers safely return to the little inn, and 'stalk clattering into the stone passage, amid a crowd of guests, who *want to see men* returning from the mountain.' Ladies want prettily to know 'what it is like,' and 'our dinner is neither lonely nor without conversation.' Here we will leave our Alpine friend, enjoying to the full the 'bonheur d'une homme qui à fait une ascension!'

But the most satisfactory result of mountain-climbing, as far as the ordinary reader is concerned, is the very beautiful book from which our illustrations are taken.*

It is in itself the most practical and useful monument that could be raised to the memory of these mountain expeditions—a book that will be treasured by all Englishmen, not only as a record of some of the bravest work ever attempted by their countrymen, but also because it is in itself a work of art of the highest kind. Accidentally, the author, combining the qualities of a bold mountaineer with a love of art and skill in wood-engraving, has been enabled to give us views of places unreachd by the lens of the photographer or the imagination of the author of 'The Switzers.'

Plain, straightforward, and manly in its tone beyond any published narrative of adventure in any country, this book, with the unassuming title of 'Scrambles,' contains a record of some of the most remarkable ascents that have been made in Switzerland, interspersed with less of what may be called 'Alpine slang' than might have been expected from so prominent and enthusiastic a member of the climbing fraternity. Of the en-

gravings, especially as to their faithfulness and artistic beauty, it is impossible to speak too highly. Once, and once only, in a drawing of the crags of the Matterhorn during a midnight storm, has the artist apparently yielded to Dorrésque influence; but the exception only proves the rule more forcibly to those who, like ourselves, can speak from personal observation of the extraordinary accuracy of these drawings.

Besides information valuable to the mountaineer, we have a long catalogue of Alpine flora, gathered from various sources. The botany of the different valleys of the Alps is carefully distinguished; but Mr. Whymper's sympathies are evidently not so much with the valleys clothed with their natural gardens of wild flowers, as with 'the little straggling plants above the snow line.' 'Oftentimes a single flower or a single stalk blooming alone 12,000 feet above the level of the sea—pioneers of civilization, atoms of life in a world of desolation, which had found their way up—who can tell how?—from far below. 'The gentian,' he tells us, 'was there, as one might have expected; but it was run close by saxifrages and by *Linaria Alpina*, and was beaten by the *Thlaspi rotundifolium*, which latter plant was the highest I was able to secure, although it was overtopped by a little white flower which I knew not, and was unable to reach. These plants ranged from about 10,500 feet to 13,000, and were the highest I had seen anywhere on the Alps.'

Mr. Whymper gives us most interesting details connected with the geology and structure of the mountains, (every mountain of importance appearing to have been dissected and taken to pieces in this book), of the strange eccentric movements of the glaciers, of the

* 'Scrambles amongst the Alps, 1860-1869.' E. Whymper. London: John Murray.



THE SUMMIT OF THE MORING PASS.

‘What the descent was like on the other side we could not tell, for a billow of snow tossed over its crest by the western winds, suspended over Zermatt with motion arrested—resembling an ocean wave frozen in the act of breaking—cut off the view.’

extent of the snow-fields, and of the temperature and condition of the atmosphere at various elevations. Aided by maps and charts, every possible route is described and marked out for the information of scramblers. There are also some details of the Fell Railway, and of the construction of the tunnel through Mont Cenis, with drawings of the 'perforators' at work in the galleries. But the main interest of the book is personal, abounding, as

it does, with narratives of adventure and 'hair-breadth' escapes; in all of which the reader will be struck with the familiar terms of friendship, sometimes almost of affection, existing between the travellers and their guides (of one of whom, Michel-Auguste Croz, there is an exact portrait in the illustration)—relations rather at variance with the usual habits of the travelling Briton.

Of the terrible catastrophe on



the Matterhorn in 1865, which threw a gloom over the beautiful valley of Zermatt from which it seems never to have brightened, most readers will have heard and read enough, and may prefer as a sample of the contents of this book, one or two extracts from the narrative of other expeditions—expeditions happily more successful, but scarcely less hazardous than the ascent of the Matterhorn.

We will take two average examples of the kind of work under-

taken by Mr. Whymper, assuring the reader (the assurance will be needed) that neither in the narrative nor in the accompanying drawings, is there a shadow of exaggeration. The first of the two drawings, 'A Cannonade on the Matterhorn,' is intended to exhibit the nature of mountain climbing on the rocks; the second, 'The Summit of the Moming Pass' (for the details of which we must refer the reader to the book itself), on the ice and snow. ;

THE ASCENT OF THE FINAL PEAK
OF THE ECRINS.

Thus far (they had been ascending since daybreak, and had reached within 700 feet of the summit) there was no trouble, but the nature of the work changed immediately. The final peak of the Ecrins may be described as a three-sided pyramid. One face is towards the Glacier Noir and forms one of the sheerest precipices in the Alps; another is towards the Glacier du Vallon, and is less steep and less uniform in angle than the first; the third is towards the Glacier de l'Encula, and it was by this that we approached the summit. Imagine a triangular plane 700 or 800 feet high, set at an angle of 50°; let it be smooth, glassy; let the uppermost edges be cut into spikes and teeth and let them be bent some one way, some another. Let the glassy face be covered with minute fragments of rock, scarcely attached, but varnished with ice; imagine this and then you will have a very faint idea of the face of the Ecrins on which we stood. It was not possible to avoid detaching stones, which as they fell caused words unmentionable to arise. The greatest friends would have reviled each other in such a situation. We gained the eastern arête and endeavoured for half-an-hour to work upwards towards the summit; but it was useless (each yard of progress cost an incredible time), and having no desire to form the acquaintance of the Glacier Noir in a precipitate manner, we beat a retreat and returned to the *schrund*.*

We again held council and decided that we should be beaten if we could not cut along the

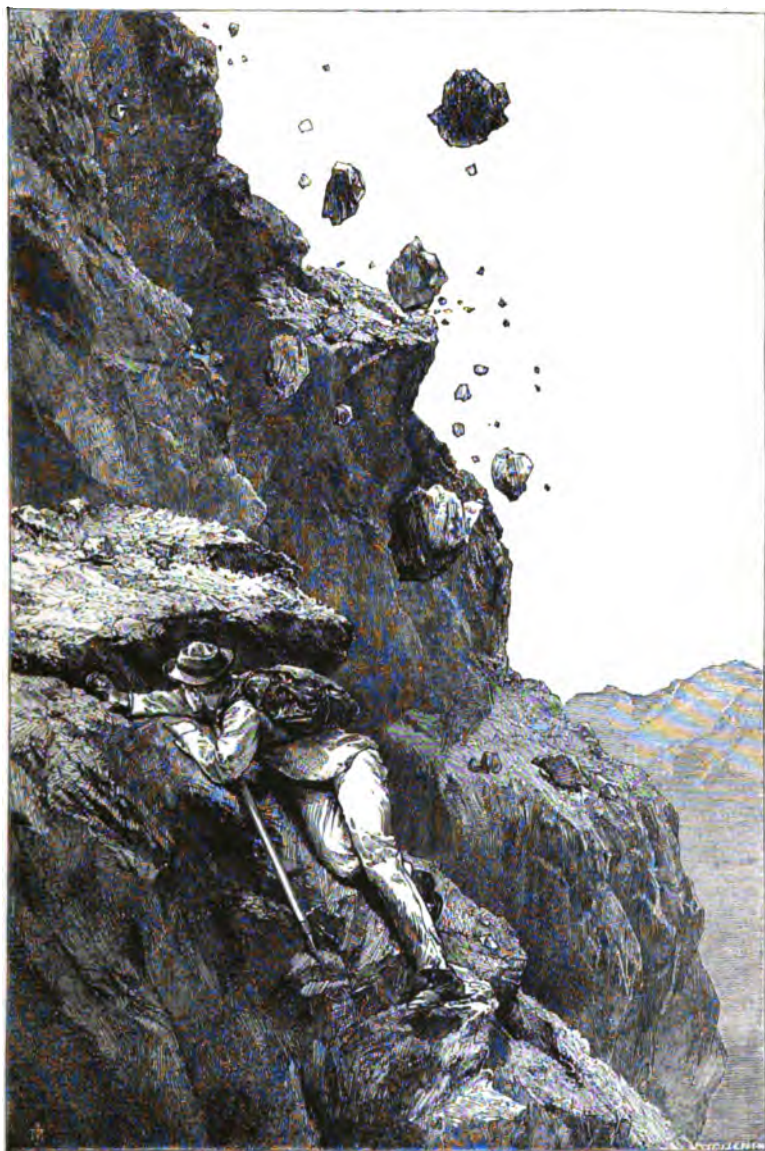
upper edge of the *schrund*, and, when nearly beneath the summit, work up to it. So Croz and Almer (the guides) went to work on ice, as hard as ice could be.

But it was weary work, hours passed and they were still cutting, whilst we slowly ascended, fastened by a rope 20 feet apart, our fingers and toes numb with cold. We were now almost immediately below the summit and stopped to look up. We were nearly as far off (vertically) as we had been more than three hours before. The day seemed going against us. The only rocks near at hand were scattered; no bigger than tea-cups, and most of these we found afterwards were glazed with ice. After more of this slow progress it was decided to go straight *up the ridge of rocks*, a situation where Mr. Whymper observes, 'one slip might have been fatal to every one.'

In another hour they gained a point on the arête close to the summit, when 'our men,' he says, 'were well nigh worn out, and we were all glad to rest for a time for we had not sat down for a minute since leaving the col six hours before. Almer, however, knowing that midday was past and that much remained to be accomplished, untied himself from the rest of the party and commenced working towards the summit. Suddenly, without a moment's warning, the snow broke under him, he plunged down on to the glacier, and I thought him lost; but he happily fell on the right side and stopped himself. Had he taken a step with his right instead of his left foot he would in all probability have fallen several hundred feet without touching anything.'

In another hour they reach the summit (a peak too small for all to stand upon at once), and are rewarded with a view 'extending

* A crevasse at the edge of the glacier, crossed and recrossed by this party, on a narrow bridge of ice.



Drawn by J. Mahoney.]

A CANNONADE ON THE MATTERHORN.

"We looked aloft, and saw in mid-air a solid shot from the Matterhorn describing its proper parabola, and finally splitting into fragments as it smote one of the rocky towers in front."



over as much ground as the whole of England, and comprising nearly all the principal peaks of the chain.'

Now for the descent which Mr. Whympster must again tell in his own words.

'We could stay on the summit only a short time, and at a quarter to two prepared to descend; but as we looked down and thought of what we had passed over in coming up, we one and all hesitated about returning the same way. Those "last rocks" were not to be forgotten. So we turned to the western arête, trusting to luck that we should find a way down. Our faces were a tolerable index to our thoughts, and apparently the thoughts of the party were not happy ones. Had any one then said to me, "You are a great fool for coming up here," I should have answered with humility, "It is too true." And had my monitor gone on to say, "Swear you will never ascend another mountain if you get down safely," I am inclined to think that I should have taken the oath. In fact the game here was not worth the risk. The guides felt it as well as ourselves, and as Almer led off he remarked, with more piety than logic, "The good God has brought us up and he will take us down in safety."'

The ridge down which they made their way was not inferior in difficulty to the others. The rocks were serrated to an extent that made it impossible to keep strictly to them, and were so rotten that they continually dislodged large blocks with their feet. At one point in this terrible descent it seemed that they would have to retrace their steps and try another way down. On one side was an enormous precipice not far from perpendicular, on the other a slope exceeding 50°.

'A deep notch brought us to a halt. Almer, the guide, who was leading, advanced cautiously to the edge on hands and knees and peered over. In this position he gazed downwards for some moments, and then without a word turned his head and looked at us. We soon learned the truth that there was no means of getting down, and that we must if we wanted to pass the notch, jump across on to an unstable block on the other side. It was decided that it should be done, and Almer, with a larger extent of rope than usual—jumped. The rock swayed as he came down upon it, but he clutched a large mass with both arms and brought himself to anchor. That which was difficult and dangerous for the first man was easy enough for the others, and we got across with less trouble than I expected.'

Our next extract is from the account of

THE ASCENT OF THE DENT BLANCHE.

'We zigzagged up the glacier along the foot of the face, and looked for a way on to it. We looked for some time in vain, for a mighty *bergschrand* effectually prevented approach, and like a fortress's moat, protected the wall from assault. We went up and up until a bridge was discovered, and then we dropped down on hands and knees to cross it.

'We crossed this *bergschrand* of the Dent Blanche at a height of about 12,000 feet above the level of the sea, and our work may be said to have commenced at this point. The difficulties of the ascent were never very great, but they were numerous, and made a very respectable total when put together. We left this spot soon after nine in the morning,

and during the next eleven hours halted only five-and-forty minutes.

Five hundred feet were accomplished when we were saluted (not entirely unexpectedly) by the first gust of a hurricane which was raging above. The day was a lovely one for dwellers in the valley, but we had long ago noticed some light gossamer clouds that were hovering round our summit, being drawn out in a suspicious manner into long silky threads. Croz (one of the guides) had prophesied before we crossed the schrund that we should be beaten by the wind, and had advised that we should return. But "forward once again, in three hours we should be on the summit." At 3.15 we struck the great ridge close to the top of the mountain. The wind and cold were terrible. Progress was often impossible, and we waited crouching under the lee of the rocks, listening to "the shrieking of the mindless wind," while the blasts swept across, tearing off the upper snow and blowing it away in streamers—nothing seen except an indescribable writhing in the air like the wind made visible.

Our goal was concealed by mist although it was only a few yards away, and the guides' prophecy that we should have to stay all night upon the summit, seemed likely to come true. The men rose with the occasion, although even their fingers had nearly lost sensation. There were no murmurings or suggestions of return, and they pressed on for the little white cone that they knew must be near at hand. Stopped again! a big mass perched loosely on the ridge barred the way, we could not crawl over, and scarcely dared creep round it. The wine went round for the last time, but the liquor was half frozen; the bottle

was left behind, and we pushed on, for there was a lull in the wind.

The end came almost before it was expected, the clouds opened and I saw that we were within twenty yards of the highest point.

Now for the descent. It was hideous work; the men looked like impersonations of winter, with their hair all frosted and their beards matted with ice. My hands were numbed—dead. I begged the others to stop. 'We cannot stop, *we must continue to move,*' was their reply. They were right, to stop was to be entirely frozen. So we went down; gripping rocks varnished with ice, which pulled the skin from the fingers. Gloves were useless; they became iced too, and the batons slid through them as slippery as eels. The iron of the axes stuck to the fingers—it felt red-hot; but it was useless to shrink, the rocks and the axes had to be firmly grasped—no faltering would do here.

We turned to descend at 4.12 p.m., and at 8.15 crossed the berg-schrund again, not having halted for a minute upon the entire descent. We made the last descent of the glacier in a mist, and of the moraine and slopes below in total darkness, and arrived after having been eighteen hours and a half on foot.

The remainder of the descent, which was comparatively easy, need not be detailed. For a complete account of this, and of many similar adventures in the Alpine world, told with surprising modesty and spirit, we must refer our readers to a book of 400 pages, containing upwards of 100 illustrations. To those who have never made Alpine expeditions as well as to those who are 'at home' on the mountains, who have not yet made acquaintance

with 'Whymper's Scrambles on the Alps'—we commend this volume, where the secrets of Switzerland are revealed to the reader in a wonderful way.

Whether the game is quite 'worth the candle'—whether it is right, or even lawful, to risk human life as it is risked every summer, is a matter scarcely within the scope of these pages. There is so much that is noble and attractive in the pastime of mountain climbing that we hesitate to say a discouraging word, but those who have read the short extracts before us must admit that the utmost limit of voluntary exposure to danger has now been reached.

The charm of wandering on ice and snow under a summer sky is

easily understood by those who, like ourselves, have spent many summers in the upper Alps; but the ordinary unambitious Alpine tourist, who believes, and perhaps rightly, that a mountain was intended to be seen from its base and not from its summit, who sees a beauty in the green valleys and blue lakes far exceeding that of ice and snow, will never perhaps quite master the secret of this fascination for desolation, this longing to wander above 'the line of life;' or understand clearly the inducement to bring a spiked boot from Oxford Street and plant it on a ledge of rock, scarce reached by chamois' tiny foot or swept by eagle's wing.



'TOT.'

'WHAT 'a yer done, Tot?'
'Ain't sold none, mother.
A boy took one on 'em.'

And Tot, a small, ragged child, delivers up to her mother eleven boxes of matches, and then delivers up herself to a scrutiny of her rags for hidden money. The search is fruitless; Tot's scanty dress does not yield even one farthing.

'I told yer 'ow it 'ud be if yer sold none, hot or cold; so out ye go.'

'I'll be froze to death, mother. I ain't eat nothink,' replies Tot, piteously.

'Froze to death will yer? I'd thank the good Lord if he'd take yer—and me too, for the matter of that. I s'pose there's sich a many wants to go, He can't take 'em all. But out *you* go,' she goes on, suddenly; and Tot is seized, pushed into the street, and the door shut before she can utter one word.

She waits for a little, hoping against hope that the door will reopen. But it isn't the first time she has been turned out, and she knows by experience how very small the chance is of getting in again. She feels very wretched, even more wretched than usual. For once in her little life of eight years Tot has spoken the truth; she *has* eaten nothing all the day. It doesn't matter much. She has starved before; and the idea that any one ought to be blamed because she is in want of food never occurs to her for a moment. She has a curious feeling in her head, too; but she has been thrashed so often, and cursed at so often, and faint with hunger so often, that she is accustomed to curious feelings.

It is very cold—freezing hard—

and there is an east wind blowing—a wind that at once declares war against Tot, and with its sharp, cruel teeth, attacks every unprotected part of her body—face, hands, legs, and various smaller pieces here and there. Before leaving the door that is so hopelessly shut, she ponders for a time how to pass the night—she is sure mother will let her in next morning. She knows lots of out-door sleeping-places; but she knows, too, that they are always well tenanted, and that, to pay her footing she must submit to a preliminary course of bullying; and she is so faint and so cold that she fears to encounter it. So she determines to walk about, trusting to some happy chance to send her a bed.

She hurries along till she gets into Oxford Street. It is late in the evening, and the shops are lighted up. Tot knows them by heart, but never gets tired of looking. One she likes best of all; it is full of tiny horses and carriages, and little men and women, and funny animals like yellow dogs, but with very thick necks covered with hair. And all these things are good to eat. Tot knows that, for she has heard a lady say so. She always stands at that window till a policeman orders her to move on; but to-night, though she has hurried along as quickly as possible to get to this particular shop, she scarcely stays there a minute. How it is she cannot tell, but she has lost all interest in the funny animals; indeed she can see nothing funny about them. She is restless, too, standing still; and she has a strange wish to get somewhere, she has no idea where.

She goes on through Oxford

Street, down Regent Street, and then turns into Piccadilly. Her head seems to get lighter every minute. She fancies, too, that she is not so cold and so hungry as at first, but she cannot be sure about it. On, on she walks, till the bright shops end, and a railing begins, with trees and grass upon the other side; and there is only a single line of light, stretching away out of sight. Tot is beginning to get out of her beat; but on she goes—she wants so much to get 'somewhere,' and there is plenty of time to go home before morning.

There is a great crowd of carriages, and cabs, and people, going the same way, and this crowd keeps getting greater and greater every minute. But Tot does not look at the carriages, or the cabs, or the people much; they wave about so strangely; and, instead of going forward in a straight line, they move in a circle round and round. She cannot help, now and then, tumbling up against the people, too, for they are continually vanishing and appearing here, there, and everywhere, in a most confusing manner; but she manages to get along, stumbling dizzily, and the crowd grows thicker and thicker. Suddenly all the carriages and cabs go off at a tangent from the circle, and rush away towards a great building on the left side of the road. It is so big that Tot cannot see where it begins or where it ends; she can only see an enormous open door, out of which a bright light is streaming. She has never seen such a place before; so she pushes her way through the crowd close to the door. The carriages drive up, and ladies and gentlemen get out of them, and go into the building. How very beautiful they are! And they keep coming and coming and coming. Hundreds

there must be, Tot thinks. And they are all quite clean; and their dresses are red and blue and gold and silver, most wonderful to see. Tot longs to know where all the people go, for she feels sure she should find what she wants there. She can see them go in pretty well, though they wave about strangely; but when they get into the bright light she can only distinguish a confused mass of colour. At last her curiosity grows so strong, that she feels she *must* find out the meaning of it all; so, gathering together all the strength at her command, she makes a rush straight at the door, runs up some steps, past two policemen, who are too astonished to stop her (though she does not know that), and is stumbling along a wide passage, to the extreme wonder of the ladies dressed in red and blue, and gold and silver, when suddenly a third policeman appears in her path. Tot tries to dodge him; but she is too feeble to have any chance of escape, and the policeman, with consummate ease, captures and secures her by a good grasp of her hair. He knows her hair is to be trusted, though her rags are not. Tot's head feels lighter than ever; she fancies it is getting away from her body, but she cannot be sure. All the people she passes look a long way off; and as for the policeman, he is miles away, though he does hold her so firmly.

'So you have managed to make a capture, Policeman—a strange one for the place.' And the speaker looks curiously at Tot, and Tot looks at him.

He is a tall man, with a great waving mass of golden hair thrown back from his face; and he has big eyes, and like all the other people, is a long way off.

'A vagabond, my lord, after handkerchers, my lord.' And Policeman releases Tot from the grasp

of his right hand and seizes her again with his left, that he may touch his hat properly to my lord.

'I ain't. I wants to see inside,' says Tot, feebly.

What a long way off her voice is! She knows now that her head has really got away.

'So you want to see inside?' says my lord.

Tot looks up at him. She has learned to read faces, and is not a bit afraid of this one.

'Yes,' she answers.

'Are you hungry or cold?'

Policeman smiles knowingly, and says, *sotto voce*, 'Trust her or any of 'em for saying yes.' He would have preferred to say this aloud; but he has seen 'my lord' before, and is not sure how he will take it.

'No,' answers Tot.

She means to tell the truth, but she has to think a little before she is quite sure what she really does feel. No, she does not feel hungry, and she does not feel cold. It is very strange, but the only feeling she has is an intense longing to see 'inside.' She would like to know why everything seems so far off, and why her head has gone away from her body; but she does not care very much about that; what she wants is to see 'inside.'

My lord is in a strange mood this night, and a strange idea seizes him.

'Leave the child with me,' he begins.

'But, my lord,' says Policeman, doubtfully.

'Have you seen her take anything? No? Then you are quite safe in leaving her.'

Policeman releases Tot, and my lord (utterly indifferent to the fact that all who pass by stare hard at him and the child) says, with a pretty smile—

'My little ragged girl, we will

go together and see this wonderful inside; but remember when you get there to repay me for my great kindness by exhibiting the most extreme astonishment. Have you a name?'

Tot looks up at him in doubt; but his face reassures her, for it is very pleasant, and she almost persuades herself he is not 'kidding.'

'Don't know. They calls me Tot,' she says, with her eyes still fixed upon his face.

'A very good name, Tot, a very good name. But I must apologize to you, Tot, for a gross breach of etiquette on my part. I should have first introduced myself. Know me, then, Tot, as Lord Casual, a radical, a materialist, a believer in equality of property and universal labour. And respect me, Tot, for conscientiously discharging the duty that devolves upon me of showing to the world a practical illustration, in my own person, of the excellence of my theory (I should, perhaps, say theories) by a hard life of sleeping, eating, shooting, hunting, and sometimes even dancing. What if I indulge in occasional fits of madness? Surely a life so completely given up to the public welfare should gain me forgiveness? Some would call me mad even now. But come, Tot, we are close to the inside.'

My lord speaks as to himself rather than to Tot. She, for her part, has no idea what he means; but she likes to hear him talk. Her head is getting so far away that she is afraid of losing it altogether; everything is getting far away. They go up some steps, and every one they pass turns to look at the ragged, white-faced child and the tall, handsome man. Some know him, and say, when he has passed—

'Just like Casual, just like him.'

Tot feels weak going up the steps, but she says nothing. She begins to doubt whether it is not all a dream. She has dreamt of policeman before—often; but never of a gentleman talking to her. They walk some distance along a passage, one side of which is all doors, and at last they stop at one of them. My lord takes a key from his pocket, places it in a hole in the door, gives a little turn and push, and it opens.

'Here we are, Tot; only four steps, and you may look at the inside till you are weary.'

A bright light comes from the open door. Tot goes in and stands motionless, as though suddenly turned to stone; rigidly staring, her eyes wide open, a faint flush on her cheek, and her chin dropped. Oh! what a wonderful place! So big and so bright! Brighter even, she thinks, than the sun itself! All the people are there, too; she can see their dresses of red and blue, and gold and silver. And—

'You may sit down, Tot,' says my lord. He looks in her face, and sees there intense wonder and awe. My lord, thereat, is surprised and pleased, yet troubled withal. But he says gaily,

'Accustomed as you probably are, Tot, to wooden chairs, on first touching one of these you may find its resistance to your frame impact but feeble, and fear it will not support you. But don't be afraid, Tot; you will find it will all come right in the end.'

Tot is very weak, and the flush in her face has quickly died out, but the wonder and awe are still there. She sits down, or falls rather, on a chair. Oh! how pleasant it is. If the other people are sitting on chairs like that how happy they must be! And she can see in every direction. The place is round, and up high there is a circle of lamps. But a very

thin circle, not nearly enough to make it so light; and Tot believes the people who are all of them so clean, must give out light themselves. So she looks at my lord; but his clothes are black, so they cannot shine; but she is not sure about his hair; she almost fancies she can see light coming from it. There is a big thing at one side of the place, made of pipes, and she would like to know what it is. But she is not quite sure that she could speak if she tried: there is a numbness coming over her, not bringing any pain with it though, not a bit. The chair is very comfortable, and Tot is in a state of the most perfect rest; never before has she been so entirely free from hunger and cold. Her wonder and awe at the vast place, too, decrease by degrees, till she is simply happy. My lord talks to her; what about she knows not—education, secular, denominational, mutual obligation, class legislation—she never heard such words before. But he wants no answers, only to talk, and perhaps my lord has never before had so satisfactory an audience.

Soon all the place, except near the big thing with the pipes, is full of people, and then! Suddenly a great sound fills the air! Loud now, and again soft, changing, and changing, and changing.

The big thing with the pipes is getting farther and farther away, all the place is getting bigger; the circle of lights above is miles high, but Tot does not mind now; it seems perfectly natural; it is not quite so light as it was, but she is very happy.

The great sound ceases as suddenly as it began, and my lord lays his hand on Tot's shoulder and says gravely,

'Not a word now, Tot, an' you love me.' But there is no fear of her speaking.

Suddenly again a new sound comes through the air, made up of all the sounds there can be, Tot thinks. Sad at first, it swells and falls in notes deep and low; bright soon, it leaps from sound to sound in notes sharp and clear. And every change, every swell and every fall, notes deep and low, sharp and clear, all join together in one great joyful noise that fills Tot's starved little body and soul with extacy. Oh! that it would never stop. Tot can hardly make out the lamps now, they are miles and miles and miles away; she can only just see the big thing with the pipes, and the people have turned into a distant mist of red and blue, and gold and silver. She looks up at my lord. He is close to her! So close, that if she could move her hand, she could touch him! She is very glad of that. She does not know, and does not want to know, how it is he has come so near. It is quite proper that the other people should be so far off, it does not pain her at all; but she is very glad my lord is near, and that she can see his face. The sound stops, and Tot feels a great shock. Oh! if it would go on again! She listens in an agony for it to return; will it never come? At last she hears it; very soft, very low, and very regular, and she is happy. Soon, above all, she hears the voice of some one singing. The sound is infinitely pure and sweet; it brings great comfort to the starved little body and soul. She can hear the words plainly, and knows what they mean. She cannot see the lamps now; only a circle of light, far away, high above her. The big thing with the pipes is gone; the mist of red and blue, and gold and silver is gone; she can see nothing but the circle of light above, and my lord sitting by her. And still the voice sings on, and

Tot is full of happiness. Hunger and cold, blows and curses must come quickly if they would come at all, the time for action is short; Death, their unfailing antidote, is near.

If my lord had seen Tot's face then he would have been frightened. But he was listening, wrapt up in pleasure; forgetful of everything but a man's voice singing, and the words were—

'Comfort ye, my people, saith your God; speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her iniquity is forgiven. The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.'

Then my lord sighs, turns his head, and looks at Tot.

Tot is seated, white and motionless, in the comfortable chair; her dirty little hands folded in one another, and her dirty little head thrown back. A change has come over the face; there is no wonder, no awe in it now, only a look, despite the dirt, gentle reader, of infinite calm and rest.

My lord is startled; he places his hand fearfully on her forehead, and suddenly with a shiver draws it back.

'God, how cold!' he whispers. 'She must have fainted.' Then in a louder tone, speaking that he may be heard by those around, he says, 'Is there a doctor here?'

Some catch the words and stare curiously at him, but a grave man rises from his seat, and answers the call. He feels Tot's pulse, and puts his hand on her heart, then shakes his head.

'Quite dead, quite dead,' he says, and looking at her shrunken face. 'Effusion of blood on the brain, I imagine, caused by want of the necessaries of life and——' with a glance round the mighty building, bright with light and

colour; 'possibly accelerated by unusual excitement. Nothing to be done, nothing. If you please, I will give you my card.'

My lord, without taking his eyes off Tot's face receives it, and the grave man goes back to his place; he is a passionate lover of music.

For a minute, my lord stands in doubt, but the British public is beginning to whisper and stare at him, it scents food for its curiosity; so, with a smile, he takes Tot gently in his arms and carries her away. At the great door is Policeman, who seems unsettled in his mind as to whether it is not his duty to stop my lord and examine his burden. But he is so perfectly calm that Policeman persuades himself it must be all right, and the way is left free for Tot's exit.

My lord, as a materialist has, of course, no belief in immortality; and he objects strongly to the custom of burial prevalent among so many nations. In his will, indeed (most carefully prepared), he has bequeathed 'his body to the nation in order that, &c., &c., science, &c., human progress, &c., on condition that all of the aforesaid body not permanently required may be burnt to ashes, &c.'

But my lord forgets to do unto others as he would others should do unto him. He finds out Tot's mother—no easy task—and then finds himself, to his own surprise, questioning her as to Tot's baptism. Tot, it seems, has been baptized, and possesses therefore a reversionary interest (vesting on her death) in graveyards.

So, on the advice of my lord, advantage is taken of Tot's interest and she is buried; far away from houses and smoke, far away out in the country, under a tiny cross in the shadow of an old square-towered church. And my lord is present at the burial, and listens to and hears every word of the service, from beginning to end. And my lord, journeying back to London, a rug over his knees, foot-warmer beneath his feet, cigar in his mouth, and forty miles an hour, thinks to himself, 'There's something in these barbarous ceremonies after all; not all prejudice. . . . Dust to dust, ashes to ashes. . . . In the hope of a glorious resurrection. . . . Poor Tot . . .'

'Hansom, sir? No other luggage, sir?'

'Curzon Street, Mayfair, as hard as you can go.'

RONDEAU.

AS strangers now, that were so close of yore,
We meet, as those that never met before.
This is the end and issue of the tale,
To point a moral for all future time,
That we, whose passion made us sad and pale,
Can meet—and I can shape it in a rhyme—
As strangers now.

O Love, Love! No man should call thee fair,
Or praise thee for thy beauty or delight;
Who art more bitter than the Sirens were,
And more than Circe full of crafty spite:—
For see, two souls that served thee passing well,
Can meet, with shatter'd faith and broken spell,
As strangers now.—L. S.

A LEAP IN THE DARK.

CHAPTER III.

THE ORGAN LOFT.

BEFORE Mr. Anstruther had got very far in his ramble, he felt he ought to have a clue in his hand to guide him back again. He strolled on, winding in and out of innumerable narrow ways, among lath and plaster villas of the purest Brummagem style of architecture, not knowing which way to go; it was all in and out, and round about. Presently he heard the sound of a church organ, whose rich tones sounded inexpressibly sweet and solemn in the gloaming. About a hundred yards further on he came upon the church itself. The gate was on the latch; he flung his cigar from his lips and walked slowly through the quiet churchyard. The organ still pealed on, its rich notes growing louder and grander as he drew near; a narrow strip of a door at the back of the church was open; without a moment's thought or reflection he sauntered in, and groped his way up a flight of dingy wooden stairs, till he came upon the organ-loft; a few steps more and he would stand face to face with the player; but he stopped short, sat down on the top step, leaned his face upon his hand, and listened.

He was a lover of music, and it affected him as it affects only the most sensitive and seeming volatile natures. He remained there, silent and absorbed, for a moment; then he lifted his head, half rose from his lounging position, and leaning slightly forward, looked upon the player. During the few moments he had been seated there, the twilight had deepened, and filled the

church with shadows of the coming night. A small lamp was burning on the right-hand side of the organ, and threw a light on the music-book and on the face of the player. Anstruther could scarcely believe his eyes! the girl he most desired to see was before him; there could be no mistake; there were the same large luminous eyes, the saucy little nose, and the rich full lips. Over the features, however, there lay a shadow of grave thought and intense feeling which seemed unnatural to the mobile, half-mocking, face that had haunted him longer than any human face had haunted him before.

She played on for some moments, unconscious that she had an audience; her small white hands drew the very soul of music out of the cold keys, and the metal throats of the organ seemed as though they would burst with sweet sounds. He still looked on her face, and gazed and listened with breathless attention. Suddenly she stopped, and listened, as though with some unexplainable mesmeric feeling, she had become conscious there was a living creature near her. She looked slowly round her, with a hushed, breathless look, then her eyes dropped upon his face! She did not start, or cry out with a theatrical scream, or do any other thing which a young lady in her position might well be excused for doing, but a pink flush rose to her cheeks, a signal of surprise.

'Go on, please,' said Anstruther, as though she had been ac-

customed to play for his special amusement all her life. 'I adore Bach, and that was one of his finest fugues.'

'It is a pity you can't indulge your admiration for Bach,' she answered, 'without stealing upon a girl in a place like this, at the risk of frightening her to death. You might have frightened me horribly, and—' the saucy look came into her face again,—'I've a great mind to scream, like a virtuous heroine in a novel!'

'Please don't,' he answered; 'I hate discord, and I don't suppose even *your* scream would be harmonious.' At this moment he became conscious that the eyes of a small boy, the organ blower, were peering upon them; surprised, perhaps, at the sudden cessation of the music, and unusual sound of voices. Anstruther took a half-crown from his pocket and flung it at the urchin, saying, 'Go back to your work, youngster, and blow hard; blow away till I tell you to stop.'

The eyes and the urchin disappeared with a broad grin.

'Well!' exclaimed the girl, with a long breath of amazement, 'considering you are an intruder and a stranger here, you *are* cool!'

'Coolness was always one of my chief attractions,' he answered; 'but you hadn't got half through that fugue; please to go on, unless,' he added, as though struck by a brilliant thought, 'you would rather talk to me!'

'Pshaw!' she exclaimed, 'I'll not speak to you another word, if you stay there till morning.' A quick frown knitted her brow, and she flashed an angry glance upon him.

'Rash vows are only made to be broken,' he answered. 'You're a woman, and couldn't keep quiet till to-morrow morning, even if you tried.' She shut down the

organ with a bang, put on her hat, and commenced pulling on her gloves, without turning another glance towards him.

He paused for a moment, and then continued, in an injured, reproachful tone, 'Well, I've often heard that ingratitude and cruelty are attributes of women, *now* I believe it. Here, I've done nothing but think of you from the first moment I set eyes on you—'

'At two o'clock this afternoon; precisely six hours ago,' she said, with satirical exactness.

'It might have been two o'clock six years ago,' he rejoined, 'though, luckily for me, it wasn't. I couldn't possibly have starved all that time as I've done to-day. I've made it a fast-day, and roused the most agonising apprehensions in the bosoms of my friends. I'm not sure they don't suspect I've come out to commit suicide—'

'I have lived, I have loved, and that was to-day,
Make ready my grave-clothes to-morrow.'

If I were inclined to sing, that should be the burthen of my song. He put on such a droll air o' mock misery that she could not keep her countenance, but laughed outright.

'You are so thoroughly ridiculous, that it is absurd to be angry.'

'So it is,' he answered; 'if you had studied for a week you could not have come to a wiser conclusion.'

'Peter, lock up, and bring down the light; I'm going away,' said the girl rising from her seat.

Anstruther rose up also, and gave himself a shake, as a Newfoundland dog does when he comes out of the water.

'A wise move,' he said; 'I shall enjoy a walk above all things, if you will keep me company.'

'I!' she exclaimed, and the great eyes flashed up at him, and bewitched him more than ever. 'You must be dreaming to think of such a thing.'

'Well,' he answered, reflectingly, 'I'm not quite sure I'm awake—will you be kind enough to pinch me and see.' He bared his wrist; and held it towards her. She put his hand aside, directed the boy to make haste, and the three descended the crooked stairs together. Peter was despatched to the sexton's with the keys, and Anstruther and the girl walked slowly through the churchyard, side by side. It was a hot, sultry evening, and she tossed her hat off and swung it by the ribbons, letting what air there was play upon her temples.

'Do you live far from here?' he enquired.

'About half a mile beyond the gates,' she answered; 'but I am generally here nearly all day long.'

'Oh!' he exclaimed, looking down upon her, and wondering what she could be doing there, 'all day long?' 'Nice, pleasant, social place this seems to be.'

'Does it?' she answered, drily; 'I hope you'll keep your opinion till the end of your visit. I suppose you are on a visit somewhere—how long are you going to stay?'

'I don't know,' he said; 'that depends a little on the charity of my friends, and a great deal on you.'

'Pshaw!' she rejoined, quickening her pace, 'I beg your pardon for asking the question.'

'Don't apologise,' he answered; 'though I don't think it would be half a bad thing if we were to amuse ourselves with a game at question, answer, and observation. I want you to tell me

something about the place and the people here.'

'It's a horrid place,' she answered promptly; 'and they are horrid people; I hate them every-one. There is not enough material to make one real, thorough gentleman, among the whole lot!'

'Oh! what a sweeping condemnation of the friends I love!' said Anstruther, seeming shocked.

'I don't believe you've any friends here,' she rejoined, looking up at him critically; 'for in spite of your "privileged" lunatic sort of behaviour, you look like a gentleman, and *they* are snobs, every one!'

'Wonderful penetration!' he exclaimed; 'I've come to the same conclusion myself. Are you coming to the pic-nic to-morrow?'

'No,' she answered; 'I'm quite out of the pale of their society; but I don't much envy those who are within it, they're always squabbling. A. won't visit B., B. looks down on C.; everybody maligns and bespatters everybody else. They all live, mentally, in glass houses, and every one throws a stone at his neighbour. By-the-bye, if anybody saw us now,' she added, quickly, 'my reputation would be torn to tatters. I must say, good-night, now; we're close to the gate, and Timmins—'

'Smother Timmins!' exclaimed Anstruther, striding majestically on.

'But we are quite strangers, you know, and it is so very improper,' she added, doubtfully.

'And very delightful, as most improper things are,' he rejoined. 'You don't suppose I'd let you walk half a mile through these lonely country lanes by yourself? Come along.' They passed out of the gate without encountering the argus eyes of Mr. Timmins.

'Do you come to practise the organ every evening, Miss ——? I didn't quite catch your name!'

'I don't think I ever told it you,' she said, saucily; 'but I see you're dying to know all about me, so I'll tell you without asking. My name is Kathleen Mackenzie, and I live with an invalid aunt—the sweetest and kindest old lady in the world—we live together in a cottage below. I play the organ on Sundays, and practise as often as I like during the week; to-day has been a holiday, but every other day I am at the rectory, teaching the children from ten till four; and horrid little brutes they are. There you can label that "brief but interesting biography of my travelling companion."'

'But have you no parents?' inquired Anstruther, more interested than before.

'No,' she answered, her face turning scarlet as she spoke, 'and that's why I'm so lonely;' her thoughts came bubbling up in words. 'My father had large estates here once, but the cottage is all we have left now—and—and—I don't say he was a particularly wise or prudent man, but he was unfortunate; they might have forgiven him his follies, I think, but they would not forgive him his misfortunes. They—these people here—she jerked her head towards the manor, 'treated him, in their polite, cruel way, like a pariah and an outcast—he died—partly of shame, I know.' But they are good Christians, very,' she added, with a quick satirical curl of her lip; 'they give me long lectures about the world, the flesh, and the devil, and are so anxious that my feet should keep in the right way that the rector's people have installed me as organist and nursery governess, for the munificent sum of sixty

pounds a year. But what right have you to be asking me these questions?' she added, angrily, 'making me tell you things I hate to talk about; but it doesn't matter, I'm at home now, and I don't suppose I shall ever see you again. Good-night. Good-bye.'

'Not yet,' he answered, as he held her small hand fast. A change had crept into his voice, as well as into his eyes, aye, and into his heart also, as he heard the brief revelation of her life and looked upon the hot, troubled face. 'You don't think I've been rude in talking to you, and inflicting my company on you like this?'

'Good gracious, no!' she answered, snatching her hand away; 'it is quite as much my fault as yours. I only hope nobody has seen us, that's all, or your character won't be worth much to-morrow.'

'No matter about mine,' he answered; 'but if I hear a man breathe a disparaging word of yours, I'll wring his neck.'

'Good-night,' she said again, without heeding his words, 'and go away please; if you stand loitering about here, old Madge will set the dog at you; she's horribly afraid of thieves.'

She walked rapidly up the little gravel pathway to the cottage, and threw a look over her shoulder at him as she entered and shut the door. He went his way with the undercurrent of his nature stirred, and thinking how strangely the good things of this world seem to be distributed, and how surely the sins of the father are visited upon the children. Very thoughtful and grave he was, as he strode slowly along and apostrophised himself thus: 'Dick Anstruther, you great, lazy, hulking scoundrel! what business have you to be living on the roses and

champagne of life, while a young thing like that works hard for its vinegar only, and pepper, poor mite! I shouldn't wonder if she supports her aunt—delightful old lady, no doubt; I must make her acquaintance.' He couldn't help thinking how heavily the world pressed upon one pair of fragile feminine shoulders while his broad back had scarcely a feather's weight of care! 'Poor little Kathleen,' he murmured, letting his lips dwell caressingly upon her name, and her face with its varied lights and shadows danced before his eyes. He had got within twenty yards of the Manor gates, when he was accosted by an individual, a sort of nondescript, or cross between a gentleman and a tailor.

'Beg your pardon, sir,' he said, touching his hat slightly, 'but could you tell me how far I am from "Grove Manor?"'

'You're close to it, here it is,' replied Mr. Anstruther.

The man stared at the gates, gave a low whistle, saying,

'Fine place—mighty fine! What luck some people have.' This was said partly to himself, as he walked a few steps by Anstruther's side. 'Perhaps you could tell me the name of the party it belongs to, sir?' he added.

'I believe it is occupied by a great many "parties," as you call them,' replied Anstruther curtly, not liking to have his thoughts disturbed by a stranger's talk. 'I dare say there are fifty houses inside the gates; if you ask at the lodge the porter will tell you where to find the special "party" you want—that is, if you want anybody,' and he looked at the man askant.

'Thank you, but I won't go any farther to night,' he answered; 'I'm an old soldier, and I always reconnoitre my ground before I

go into action. He touched his hat and walked on.

'That fellow's up to no good,' thought Anstruther, watching him as he went in the opposite direction to Kathleen Mackenzie's cottage; had he gone *that* road Anstruther would have followed him.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CROQUET PARTY.

Mr. Anstruther had made up his mind to leave Grove Manor the following morning, but 'as great events from trivial causes spring,' now he resolved to stay on a little while at least; he meant to make himself agreeable to Mrs. Woollaston too. He knew that to disgust or annoy the mistress of a house, is not exactly the way to win, or keep, a welcome.

On entering the library after breakfast the next day, he found Mr. and Mrs. Woollaston busily concocting a list for an evening party which they intended to give in his honour. There was a wonderful change in the lady's manner since her first reception of him. The fact is Mr. Woollaston had contrived to impress her with an extravagant idea of his friend Anstruther's position and importance in the world; she had already set the telegraph of tongues to work, and the news was flying like wild-fire, or faster, that an earl's son, the heir to fifty dukedoms, was visiting at Mrs. Woollaston's, quite incog., however, as he did not wish to be recognised.

Seeing that his friends were busily engaged at the writing table, Anstruther sat down near the window, reading the paper; but he could not help hearing scraps of the wrangling conversation which was going on between them.

'The Browns! why the Browns?' exclaimed Mr. Woollaston, knitting his brows as he checked the list.

'I suppose I cannot invite the candlesticks and spoons without their owners,' she answered with some asperity; 'if things had been as I once blindly believed, we should have no need to borrow either.'

'My dear,' replied Mr. Woollaston, mildly, 'I don't think you've any special grievance; we were both misled.'

'You needn't give your biography before its time,' interrupted his wife, with a warning look to remind him they were not alone. Mr. Anstruther was apparently absorbed in his newspaper. Mr. Woollaston coughed down any little vexation that was rising, and continued his examination, remarking as he did so,

'Really, my dear, I don't quite understand this; here are the names of so many objectionable people. Here's Naggles! perhaps I shouldn't mind him, if he'd leave his wooden leg behind.'

'He couldn't come with only one leg, and that cork,' replied Mrs. Woollaston. 'Not that I care much for the Naggleses, but Mrs. Naggles, with her rich brocades, beautiful lace, and diamonds, helps to dress the drawing-room. I've made a choice selection; there's not a single name put down without a motive. There's Major Smithers! rather a heathen, I admit, but then he gave five guineas to my fund for the distressed "Black-pudding maker's association." There's the Jaggerses, vulgar people, I don't deny it, eat with their knives and pick their teeth with their forks, but they are rich! I can borrow their maid and a couple of men to save waiters; besides, Caroline Jaggers sings beautifully. Then there's

Miss Mountain, a venomous old maid, we know, but I couldn't leave her out, or she'd backbite us to death. Mrs. Wells, again, I must borrow her elephant and those beautiful reindeers.'

'My dear Mrs. Woollaston,' exclaimed Anstruther, throwing down his paper and lounging towards the table, 'are you going to have a zoological exhibition?'

'They are only cakes,' she answered, condescending to enlighten him, 'highly ornamented and decorated with Christian symbols, that might have an effect on thinking minds.'

'Or unthinking digestions,' rejoined Anstruther.

'They are not meant to be cut,' she explained; 'they have been on duty at every evening party she has had for the last six months; but I suppose they must be cut and eaten some day.'

'I would advise the gourmand to order his coffin at eight o'clock precisely the next morning,' said Anstruther. 'But by-the-bye, Mrs. Woollaston, I've heard you mention a good many of your neighbours, is not there a family of the name of Mackenzie somewhere on the Manor?'

'No,' she answered; reflecting a moment, she added, 'I forget, yes there is an unrecognised young person of that name.'

'What do you mean by an unrecognised person?'

'Why, a person whom we cannot countenance,' replied Mrs. Woollaston. 'I told you we were obliged to be very select.'

'So I see,' observed Mr. Anstruther, drily, reflecting upon the conversation he had just heard, and the 'high tone' likely to be held by such a selection.

'Miss Mackenzie is at least a lady born and educated,' said Mr. Woollaston.

'Actions make the lady; and,

weighed in the social scale, Miss Mackenzie would be found decidedly wanting.'

Anstruther could not help smiling, as he thought over that day's sayings and doings. He was forced to admit that, weighed in the social stereotyped scale which etiquette holds for the conduct of young ladies, poor Kathleen would be found deficient in the proper quantity of proprieties. Indeed, if any other gentleman but Richard Anstruther had been the hero of the day, he would, no doubt, have been immensely disgusted at Miss Mackenzie's behaviour; but, as he had been an actor in the little impromptu scenes that had taken place, he was inclined to take a merciful view of the conduct of his fellow sinner, and decided that she had done and said precisely the right thing, and only wished it was to be done over again. Seeing he did not answer her, Mrs. Woollaston continued:

'It is a strange thing, Mr. Anstruther; but when a girl is *less* circumspect in her manner, and *more* improper in her conduct than other people, the men are sure to take her part.'

Anstruther was not surprised at that, and said so.

'Of course,' she added, 'I cannot expect *you*, a young man of the world, to be very loud in your condemnation, since you gain the benefit of her improprieties.'

He protested that he never derived any benefit from anybody's improprieties; then, seeing the conversation was drifting away from the object that most interested him, he brought it back by an adroit observation. Her enormities were duly set before him.

'Since Mr. Woollaston is so interested in this young person, he will tell you if I exaggerate her behaviour, which is of the wildest and most insulting description. I

can't think how the rectory people endure her—but they do.'

'Because they grind more out of her than they would out of any other poor devil at the price,' growled Mr. Woollaston, rather inclined to take up the cudgels in her behalf, but not quite bold enough.

Without heeding his interruption, the lady continued: 'She is their nursery governess, but is thoroughly unsuited to the position. She is organist at the church, too; and only the other Sunday, when I went up to speak to her between the services, I discovered her perched upon the music-stool eating bread and butter, and reading a novel! And she wasn't a bit ashamed at being found out! When I reproved her, and would have put the Bible in her hand instead, she told me to mind my own business!'

'What an awful termagant!' exclaimed Anstruther, smiling and rubbing his hands together. He could very well imagine Miss Mackenzie in a passion. 'Please go on. You describe things so vividly, you inspire me with a wholesome horror of this unrecognised petticoat.'

His hypocritical flattery pleased Mrs. Woollaston, who continued blandly: 'There is not very much to tell, except that she behaves in a way that no sane, well-conducted lady would do, and outrages all the rules of decent society—walks three miles to the top of the Dyke Hill to look at the sunset or moonlight, or some such ridiculous thing; and has been seen walking home through the village at eleven o'clock at night!'

For a second Anstruther felt insanely jealous. He fancied some other bearded creature sauntering by her side through the lonely lanes, looking down upon her with the same eyes as he had done, and

she—horrid little flirt!—bewildering and bewitching that *other* as she had bewitched *him*. But his momentary pang soon passed away as Mrs. Woollaston added, 'I don't mean to say she is accompanied by any improper male companion. So far she conducts herself decently; though it is highly imprudent for a girl to go flitting about the country by herself in that fashion. But it is no use to talk to Miss Mackenzie. If she was to take a fancy to top-boots and a wide-awake, I believe she'd wear 'em.'

'Shocking depravity!' sighed hypocritical Anstruther.

'I say,' exclaimed Mrs. Woollaston, waxing more severely virtuous than ever, 'she ought to be whipped, and put into a reformatory. But she has no parents to look after her, and lives with a crippled old aunt, who adores her, and thinks there is nobody in the world like her niece "Katty."'

'And no wonder; the girl works hard enough to keep her,' rejoined Woollaston. 'I don't mean to deny that Miss Mackenzie is an out-and-out sort of young party—rather a combustible being—but she is a very good, industrious girl for all that. If she was old and ugly, I believe you ladies would have some compassion on her; but as she is young and—and lonely' (he dare not say pretty), 'you are all dead against her; and yet she has done nothing wrong.'

'No, not *yet*,' replied Mrs. Woollaston, with malice aforethought; 'but when she has an opportunity she *will*.'

'Give her the benefit of the doubt, and hope she won't,' said Mr. Anstruther, laying his hand kindly on his friend's shoulder. He was glad to see there was some fair, honest feeling under the sham and pretence that encrusted his social character, since he would

not let the world bear too heavily on the absent.

The result of this conversation, so far from driving Miss Mackenzie out of his thoughts, rooted her deeper into them. From the little he had seen and heard, he understood perfectly how matters stood with her. She was poor and proud. Her rich, fantastic nature could not assimilate with those about her. She would not be patronised or condescended to, and took rather a delight in defying and shocking society. Society (at least, the society of Grove Manor) shut its door in her face, and she shut the door of her heart in theirs.

Instead of joining the croquet party that afternoon, he would much rather have mooned about the place, and would no doubt have been found haunting the organ-loft, on the chance of meeting Miss Mackenzie; but that could not be.

About four o'clock in the afternoon he was conveyed by his hostess to the combined 'croquet ground.' Mr. Woollaston, beautifully got-up in a pair of patent leather boots, which agonised him at every step, and made him walk like a lame duck, followed behind, carrying his wife's bouquet. On arriving at the ground, they found several other members of the firm had already taken the field, each family being anxious, as a point of etiquette, to receive their own friends. Mr. Anstruther was compelled to undergo the ordeal of a general introduction. Two ladies of uncertain age, inclined to be amiable, laid violent hands upon him, and took him round the ground to see how the games were laid out. He did not particularly care what became of him, so he resolved to abandon himself to the winds and waves of fate; and in less than ten minutes he had involved himself in a violent flirtation, making most hypocritical

speeches to both at once, making engagements for croquet and ices to an alarming extent. He was recklessly inclined to be agreeable for the moment, and would as soon have flirted with his grandmother, or anybody else's grandmother, as not, that day. He knew there was no chance of seeing the *one face* he most cared to see, and he must live till the end of the day without a glimpse of it; so he resolved to amuse himself in the best way he could, though he found it slow work.

Meanwhile the company began to arrive thick and fast. Mr. Anstruther did not particularly care who anybody was, and lounged lazily along, the ladies warbling on each side of him, exchanging nods and glances with their several friends, but holding him fast in their delicate meshes, and showing no inclination to let him loose.

'You see that lady in blue?' whispered one, indicating a stout, high-coloured matron in pale blue satin, who had two daughters and a meek-looking young man in tow. 'That is Mrs. Quick, the wife of the celebrated lawyer Quick, of the Old Bailey. Most celebrated man—very seldom lost a cause—though they do say Mrs. Quick is the best lawyer of the two. I'll introduce you. They are a good sort of people to know. You couldn't do better than cultivate their acquaintance.'

'If I meditated committing a felony, perhaps I might,' he answered; 'but at present I am too happy in your society to wish for any other.'

The lady tapped him with her parasol, said he was 'wicked, and didn't mean all he said, did he?' the tender inquiry being put with the naïveté of blushing sixteen. He began to suffer now for his polite platitudes of the last hour. He was tired of his companions,

and looked moodily round for some means of escape. When one gentleman is buttonholed by another, he can sometimes break away; but when he is earwigged by a lady, what can he do but grin and bear the infliction?

Meanwhile the games were arranged, and Anstruther found himself, mallet in hand, knocking the balls viciously about, sending them anywhere and everywhere except in the right direction. Some one whispered significantly to Miss Forester that he was too much occupied to attend to the game; she simpered and admitted the fact.

As the time rolled on, the outcasts and aliens of that special society came sauntering on to the croquet ground, wandering in and out among the players, often disturbing the game, and airing their grievances in the eyes of their enemies. The rector and the doctor, as in duty bound, paused to shake hands and exchange a few words with the indignant uninvited. Presently, as Anstruther gazed listlessly round upon his broiling companions, wondering if the game would ever end, he caught a glimpse of Miss Mackenzie seated under a tree outside the enclosure, evidently having a divided duty, taking care of two children on her employers' account, and watching the croquet-ground on her own. It was Mr. Anstruther's turn to play, and he struck the ball with a vengeance, and sent it flying over the enclosure, almost at the feet of Kathleen Mackenzie! He anathematised his carelessness, strode across the ground, vaulted over the fence, and in another moment was at her side, looking down upon her face, which dimpled with smiles, in spite of her endeavour to watch his approach gravely. He kicked the ball out of his way, and sat

down by Miss Mackenzie's side. A few words, spoken with a radiant face, told her how glad he was to see her.

'These people here have been tormenting me with their monstrous shams and affectations; it is quite refreshing to get a glimpse of such a face as yours. Won't you say you're a little pleased to see me, too?'

'I am not particularly sorry,' she answered, 'or I should get up and go away. It is your turn to play again, I think; they're looking for you and beckoning.'

'I don't see them,' he answered, looking perversely in another direction; 'wild horses shouldn't drag me back into that enclosure to-day, I've had enough of it. If it wasn't for you, I wouldn't stay in this place another hour; believe me or not, just as you please.'

'Oh, dear!' exclaimed Miss Mackenzie in some evident distress, 'don't speak to me, please; here's that dreadful Miss Forester coming this way.'

The angular spinster approached with thunder on her brow and lightning in her eyes, though she spoke, or tried to speak, with a playful accent.

'You're a deserter, Mr. Anstruther; come back, and be tried by your corps! But what is the matter,' she added, changing her tone, 'are you in pain?'

'Excruciating agony,' he answered, screwing up his face, distorting his features, and writhing as though with an endeavour to overcome sharp pain; 'that confounded ball!' he gasped, drawing a breath between each word; 'I went to kick it back into the enclosure, and—Oh-h-h!—sprained my ankle; I'm not sure I've not dislocated my great toe!'

'Dear, how sad!' exclaimed the sympathetic lady; 'can't you stand; will you lean on me?' He

made a wry face and shook his head. 'Dr. Jeffrey is on the ground,' she added; 'I'll fetch him and——'

'Pray don't,' said Anstruther, 'I hate doctors—I wouldn't have a doctor if I was dying! If I keep here quiet for half an hour, perhaps I shall be better. Dear Miss Forester, if you would do me a kindness, keep all sympathising inquirers away. I'm sorry to break off our pleasant companionship, but it is only broken to be renewed under happier auspices.' He collapsed suddenly, as though with suppressed pain, and squeezed Miss Forester's hand. 'If you value my regard, keep these people away.'

Miss Mackenzie looked on this brief scene with open-eyed wonder.

'Don't be shocked at my fibbing,' he said, in his old way, 'I've only added a little of my sham to theirs. Having once caught a glimpse of you, I couldn't have gone back to them. I've been calculating that it would take exactly one hundred and fifteen of these people to make one decent-looking woman.'

'And yet you seemed to be enjoying yourself very much. I've been sitting here watching you and Miss Forester.'

'Have you! what an interesting amusement you must have found it!' he answered. 'I ought to make an exception, perhaps, in favour of Miss Forester; she is a remarkably fine woman, with no superfluous flesh about her, high aristocratic cheek-bones, and a Roman nose—I adore cheek-bones and Roman noses. But there,' he added, quickly, 'don't waste time talking about these people; I'm sure we can find some more agreeable subject for conversation, though this is not quite such a pleasant place as the organ-loft,

Are you going there to practice this evening?

'No,' she answered, 'I've had a hard day; I rose very early, and I'm tired.'

'Are you? well, you look tired; but early rising is invigorating, not wearying, after a good night's rest.'

'I did not have a good night's rest,' she rejoined. 'I could not sleep; I lay thinking—thinking till day-break.'

'Thinking,' he repeated the word, and looked intently on her face; 'I'd give more for your thoughts than for any printed book that ever was written. One can't talk much here; when am I to see you again?'

'Perhaps never,' she answered; 'it does not matter much.'

'No, not much,' he said; 'but it matters just a little. When? come, tell me when?'

'I never make appointments with strangers,' she answered, her colour deepening as she spoke.

'Oh!' he said, with a comical look under his eyes, 'that is the first conventional phrase I've heard you utter; but according to the law of nature, everybody must be strangers till they get well acquainted. Now, I want to leave off being a stranger; how can I do that if you won't help me?'

'You seem to have helped yourself pretty well, so far,' she said, demurely.

'Yes, but I've got to the end of helping myself. There seems to be no chance of our meeting in an orthodox fashion, so we must improvise a fashion of our own.'

'Hush! here comes Mrs. Herschel,' exclaimed Miss Mackenzie.

The Rector's wife was approaching very near them, and Mr. Anstruther, in order to draw im-

mediate notice from Kathleen, managed, by a dexterous movement, to trip the obnoxious Alfred on to soft grass. He set up a howl on the instant. Anstruther took him up, and soothed and amused him in his fantastic way, while maternal anxiety approached, and ascertaining there was no damage done, addressed the young lady, saying,

'You had better take the children home, Miss Mackenzie. I'm sorry you brought them here, for your sake, as well as their own.'

'I'm sorry I can't appreciate your sorrow for my sake. I don't know when I have enjoyed an afternoon so much,' said Miss Mackenzie, as she rose up, made a polite inclination to Mr. Anstruther, and walked slowly away with her young charges. Anstruther almost forgot all about his sprained ankle, and was going to spring up to escort her to the Rectory, but for her sake he thought he had better not. By this time his imaginary accident had got bruited over the ground. His friends and their friends came flocking round him; among them Doctor Jeffrey, full of professional sympathy, but Anstruther would none of him. He borrowed a stick, and limped out of sight of the croquet players, then drawing himself to his full height, he wielded the stick 'shelalah' fashion, and walked rapidly out of the Manor dominion into the open country beyond, indulging in an unusual amount of serious thought and reflection.

'Dick Anstruther,' he exclaimed, addressing himself, 'you're hit, hard hit, this time. Dear little, piquant, saucy Kathleen! She might as well live with the Red Indians in the Rocky Mountains as in this den of uncivilised Christians.'





Painted by S. Hodson.]

"SWEET SUMMER TIME."

[See Page 175.]

SWEET SUMMER-TIME.

SWEET Summer-time! Sweet Summer-time! in the merry days of yore
 Our fathers hailed thy hearty scenes, as each came round once more.
 Thy genial rays o'er th' old-world ways shone out then festively ;
 For the hearts of men were fresh and green as the young leaves on the tree.
 Then the maidens washed in May-dew, and crowned the young May queen,
 And danced the joyous May-pole dance upon the village green.
 They chased the painted butterfly along the flowery mead,
 And mixed the wort and wild-rose leaves with the rock-fern's magic seed ;
 For flower and leaf and insect's wing had meanings fond and true—
 Sweet esoteric meanings which the love-sick maiden knew ;
 Whilst the fairies danced by moonlight as the midsummer came on,
 And the bonfires blazed o'er all the hills on th' eve of good Saint John.
 Sheep-shearing feast and harvest-home were feasts of homely pride,
 Where yeoman would with hind sit down, and lord and squire preside.
 The manly game and rustic dance invoked the minstrel's lay,
 And harvest hymns arose to heaven at morn and close of day.
 Oh, then it was a goodly sight the hawking train to see
 At summer dawn on the Castle lawn, or 'neath the greenwood tree,
 As, pair by pair, the brave and fair wheeled into ordered line,
 With their palfries proudly prancing, nodding plumes, and scarlet fine ;
 With falcons perched, and the falcon bells tinkling their silvery chime,
 And they rode away to a 'lirra-lai!' of that old Sweet Summer-time!

Sweet Summer-time! Sweet Summer-time! as the changing ages flow,
 We've lost our father's love for thee in the brave days long ago.
 Thy joys no more we warmly woo, no more thy blessings prize ;
 We turn our backs on Nature's claims, and Nature's love despise.
 Vainglorious Fashion's Season with Sweet Summer-time comes on,
 And all her slavish votaries are crowding into town.
 'Ho! Sarah, pack My Lady's robes! Ho! Susan, pack her shawls!'
 Sir Harry's valet folds his coats; My Lord selects his smalls!
 The travelling carriage now draws up before the ancient hall;
 And high-born dame and daughters proud no 'natural tears' let fall,
 Leaving so lone th' ancestral home amidst its blooming bowers,
 Its lakes and lawns, its rich parterres, old oaks, and young May-flowers.
 Oh! cull those glorious roses, gentle maidens, whilst you may,
 Of your own deserted Eden they'll remind you by the way :
 Oh, drink their morning sweetness, for soon it will be flown—
 Too soon mid Fashion's heat and press be wasted like your own.

By all thy heart-inspiring scenes unmoved, they haste away,
From nature, health, and thee they fly, oh bounteous, bonny May!
Thee, too, and all thy glowing charms, thy days so bright and boon,
Thy nightingales and dreamy nights they scorn, sweet flowery June!
And rich July thou'lt too pass by with thy mellow fruits and flowers,
Till torrid August finds them still in Folly's giddy bowers,
Where England's peerless beauties—her noblest and her best—
From midnight chime to sun-dawn waste their hours of priceless rest;
Where o'er-flushed Vanity will press at Fashion's high command,
And youth will dance with vain pretence where age can scarcely stand.
Where music's swell, perfumes and lights, and the flashing gems more bright
Will make the maiden's pulse throb fast with undefined delight.
And this, all this, she dreams is bliss—she dreams it day and night.
Yet see her from the dizzy rout emerging into morn,
From morning's blushes shrinking, and homeward carriage-borne!
Oh, see her as she enters home, and mounting up the stair,
Her faded looks and half-closed eyes, and sadly languid air!
A feverish hour of sleep is snatched; then up and out once more,
To dream through Fashion's giddy round—bliss-dreaming as before.
Till sunken eye and wasted cheek proclaim, before its time,
The flower of beauty fading fast in Youth's Sweet Summer-time!

As Day's young goddess mounting up leaves th' eastern hills behind,
With gypsy hat and loose white robe—her bright locks unconfined—
See, wandering by the willow brook, the pride of Lilly Dale,
Health's incense drinks with every breath of morning's freshest gale;
And, as she trips the banks along, the wild-rose blooming there,
The lilies floating on its breast are not more fresh and fair.
The wild bee's hum, and thrush's song salute her on her way;
Through dancing beam and spangled grass the gaudy insects play;
Springs up the purple butterfly; the chase is now begun;
And Beauty's by the Insect Queen is led, and still led on.
Oh, race of health! oh, race of wealth—a wealth of hope and joy!
Oh, artless maiden, keep it up, until the archer boy
Shall take thee in thy turn in chase, in thy rich beauty's prime,
And crown your gentle hopes and joys in Love's Sweet Summer-time!

JOHN SHEEHAN.

HAUNTED CLOISTERS.

A Reverie.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'THE HARVEST OF A QUIET EYE,' 'POPPIES IN THE CORN,' ETC.

LET me consider. No, it cannot be twenty years ago, since I set foot in the precincts and cloisters of Castle-town. Not twenty years ago, certainly; but in time, as well as in space, distances deceive. Your perspective somehow gets exaggerated, as in a photograph. And something more than and besides the veil of the intervening air, whose density increases of course as you recede, a subtler power than this gives to some objects, events, experiences, a fictitious distance. Suddenly they seem so far removed from you. Almost a gulf yawns between you and them. You rub your eyes and wonder. But just now left behind—and lo, at once, so far away! Yes, a subtle power, an influence that suddenly rose, a veil, a mist, aye, a mist it often is, composed of heart-heaved sighs, risen from old reservoirs of exceeding bitter tears. Tears that fell long time ago—or yesterday—and that seemed to sink away, or to dry up, and so to be forgotten. But it happened not so with them. No, they trickled down into secret pools held hidden from view of men; they trickled down by many a crooked winding channel, through this stratum and then that, soft chalk, enduring flint, crumbling sandstone—and indeed the heart's basin retains them all. Men who walk over the surface, noting only the content of the corn, or the gaiety of the flowers—men know nothing, surmise little, of those salt and bitter pools that the dripping caverns hold. Nevertheless, if only they could see or would watch, certain it is that times do

come when the pools brim up and brim over from the eyes, and set streamlets meandering over the cheeks—where just an hour ago you saw the dimpling of a smile, the creaming of gay laughter. And from these same hidden pools it doubtless is, that the strange something, the veil, the gauze-mist arises, that puzzles and confuses our vision, making a '*long, long ago*' of what we have yet good reason to believe is, in truth, parted from us by only a few weeks, months, years.

We are poor judges, in truth, of distances in time or space. Why, according to the wind, that ring of bells from the little grey tower a field or two away, might be held to be an hour, or a few minutes apart from us. And so according to circumstances, as capricious, as ungraspable, as impalpable as the wind, events of yesterday are sent off miles away; events of many years ago brought even close to the startled ear. Hence, especially in a reverie, we are ill judges of the lapse of time; and that which seems to us a matter of twenty years back, may be double that distance behind us; or, on the other hand, not half the time—possibly an experience of almost yesterday.

Twenty years ago, or longer, or less, it matters little. There was a time in my life when I first entered Castle-town, a time in my life when I last saw it. Memories genial, kindly, grotesque, pathetic, are wedded to the place in my mind; and whether through distance of time, or from any other cause, the events to which they be-

long appear to me half distinct and half dreamlike, and the recollection of them, if I indulge it, speedily passes into a reverie. They were none the less real experiences, however dreamlike some of them appear to me. Possibly they may set answering bells a ringing in some other silent memory-tower. Let me, on the chance of it, set them down.

A royal abode, a proud and stately cluster of rounded towers, and flanking turrets, capped with curious extinguisher peaks, which, they say, rightly restore the architecture of, I think, King Edward the Fourth's time. Wide and stately terraces, broad park grounds about, and long grand avenues up to the Castle gates. The Castle standing up, as a castle should do, on an eminence clear above the streets, and above the many houses which nestle under it, or run partly up the hill towards it. Grey, and massive, and superb: one vast horse-shoe tower noble as that at Windsor. Trees with the ripe flush of Autumn upon them, clasping the stern, and bare, and impassive stone in their tender and graceful embrace. And see! the Sun sends out a sudden golden gleam from under a copper cloud, and touches the highest foliage into warmth, and bathes the cold obdurate Towers in the semblance of a smile.

But the train has run into the long station, and I am to proceed to a nearer acquaintance with Castle-town, and with the Castle, its grim Warder.

I pause for a moment on the platform, bag in hand. 'Want a cab, sir?'—'a porter, sir?'—'a coach and six, sir?' Oh, but friends, if I do, can I not ask for it? am I dumb, think you, or stupid? Leave me, pray you, the luxury of a moment's undecided

thought as to what I *do* want. You see (*no thank you* :) I've come (*no thank you* :) intending to indulge in the hazardous luxury of a surprise. Shall I carry my own bag? Nay, 'twere somewhat burdensome; and I can well outwalk the porter. Here, my friend, excuse my crossness just now; but I've done thinking. Will you take this presently to the Cloisters, to the Rev. Arthur Elam's, Minor Canon? You know him well? That's right: O yes, in a quarter of an hour will do very well.

So rid of my *impedimenta*, I spin out of the Station, and critically reconnoitre Town, Castle, and surroundings. The Cloisters are, I know, somewhere within the precincts; I can't do wrong, then, in entering at the first aperture that presents itself. What a lot of stone stairs! but I am in the mood for springing lightly up them. Not only that I am out for a holiday, and that this is only the first week of six, nor only that the prospect widens and pleases as it widens, as each surmounted flight brings to the haven of a platform upon which a moment's pause is permissible. No, besides this I have the pleasurable feeling that I am altogether unexpected. A hazardous luxury I called this, and it is so; but delight wants its keenest zest, unless there be a faint tinge of uncertainty as to its attainment—

"A vague, faint augury of despair!"

It is, of course, absolutely necessary before you venture on my experiment, to make quite sure that, however unexpected, you will therefore be only the more welcome and gladly greeted. About *this* I have no misgivings whatever. How often have I been pressed to come to stay with this dear sister of mine at Castle-town, but could not until now. Am I not, have I not

been all the journey through, re-
 velling in the anticipation of the
 demure walking in—the brighten-
 ing blue eyes—the exclamation,
 ‘Why, it’s Jack!’—(we retained
 the old boy and girl soubriquets)
 —the sudden arms about my
 neck? No, no, no fear as to
 the welcome. But there was
 the other possibility, which would
 dash the effervescence of the cup
 of delight, viz., the case of the
 sister and her husband being
 out. How blank you look, if you
 come down only for the day, at
 the ‘Gone out, sir, and won’t be
 back till eleven.’ There is nothing
 to be done, you feel, and ruefully
 recall your wife’s warning as to the
 folly of making your visit unan-
 nounced. Still, the pleasure some-
 times makes the uncertainty worth
 risking. However, I had not come
 only for the evening; so if the
 first effervescence *should* die down,
 there would be a pleasant still
 draught for the later hour; cosy
 to be sitting in the warm room,
 having foraged for some dinner,
 and to expect the surprise; the
 knock at the door, the little delay
 in the passage; mat, coat, hat to
 be cared for;—then the unsus-
 picious walk in, at first not per-
 ceiving the occupant of the arm-
 chair by the fire, (who had, of
 course, carefully avoided leaving
 tell-tale signs in the hall)—then
 the greeting!

Well, all is right to-day, I find,
 on ringing the bell of the door
 with antique knocker in the dark
 Cloister. I have, indeed, both
 sensations, the sister surprised at
 home, the husband coming in
 presently from the afternoon ser-
 vice at the Chapel. How pleasant,
 the passing with them from room
 to room, to inspect the queer, old-
 fashioned, inconvenient house,
 which yet looks cosy with the
 stamp of home, then dinner, we
 three (the number of the Graces),

in a room all angles, recesses, and
 unparallel walls; the after-dinner
 chat, the snug closing round the
 drawing-room fire; family prayers;
 and then, bed? No, it is necessary
 that a paper be sent off early to-
 morrow to an expectant editor;
 and I must therefore keep vigil
 and burn the midnight oil now
 that the

‘Lights are fled, the garlands dead,
 And all but I departed.’

Difficult, at first, to settle down
 into a sufficient quietude and
 recess of thought, after the ex-
 citement of the first chat, to admit
 of picking up the dropt thread of
 my ideas. I look up musingly,
 pen poised in hand, and please
 myself with contemplating the
 quaint bay-windowed room. Of
 course it has a history; it was,
 indeed, the apartment of a fair
 girl, maid of honour to a queen,
 afterwards a queen herself, and
 then the victim of a tyrant’s rage.
 Well, her part was played out
 long ago, and the gay dresses laid
 aside: the hopeful entrance and
 the sharp exit, things of the far-
 away past to her now.

But while I muse and settle
 down to write, there is a fascina-
 tion to me in the hollow *tramp*,
tramp, of the Sentinel beneath,
 monotonously pacing the cloisters.
 Now it deadens as he recedes, now
 grows distinct; there is a sense
 of security, also of companionship,
 as he and I seem to have the
 world to ourselves alone. Solemn,
 too, the occasional reassuring an-
 nouncement, ‘*All’s well!*’ spoken
 into the darkness and the silence.
 But presently the tramp stops,
 and a murmur of voices rises from
 beneath. Ah, then, it is my host,
 not yet gone to bed. He has
 compassionately descended to have
 a talk with the grim old grenadier,
 who, nothing afraid of a living
 foe, yet has a cold dread upon

him because of the neighbourhood of the unaggressive Dead. This my brother explains to me, when, the talk being broken off by the approach of an officer, and the deep '*All's well!*' prelude to the continuous 'tramp' again, he looks into my seclusion on his way to bed, the last but one of the lights, that, like sparks in burnt paper, have wandered to and fro about the house, and gone out, one by one. Truly, next day I perceive, on emerging from the little dark passage, that the wall is covered, the ground paved, with these tablets of the Dead. O solemn, but passive congregation, why should the living fear them?

'Their looks are very mild and meek.'

They cannot hear us when we speak. Ah, but *cannot* they? Cannot an exceeding bitter cry pierce the seeming apathy of their repose, break the spell of their utter silence? At any rate,

'The silence is unbroken, and the darkness gives no token.'

And the only word there spoken is the bitter cry we sped. Death, the Terror; death the Angel (which we will), stands sentry over their slumber, but they make no sign, nor can they, if they would, elude his vigilance to communicate with us.

'We hear at times a sentinel

Who moves about from place to place,

And whispers to the worlds of space,
In the deep night, that "*All is well.*"'

However my article has come to an end, and my companionable light leaves the window, and the monotonous tramp in the Cloisters must go on now unheard by me, and my last spark goes about the tinder, and dies presently in my queer little room, which owns only one spot in which I can stand upright. And soon I am immersed in grateful oblivion.

But next day I am to be introduced to a remarkable character, whom I wish Charles Dickens had happened to fall in with. Let this feeble pen recall what it may of his specialities. See, we near him, led now by his daughter (for he is blind), to sit for an hour in the cloisters. He is busy in conversation with himself, conversation interspersed with short scornful laughs, upon the one master-subject of his thought. I have been forewarned as to his little peculiarity, at least, his special peculiarity of all, which is that all his thoughts run perpetually upon the Devil. It is concerning that fallen angel that he holds those sarcastic soliloquies, talking, if not to him, at any rate of him. So for granted does he take it, that the subject of his own thoughts is also certainly and always the subject of yours, that he never thinks it necessary to go beyond pronouns, nor to specify by any name the lost spirit who is his perpetual theme. It is always '*He,*' and '*Him.*' So I am prepared, when, upon my brother's accosting him, he plunges into the subject without explanation or preface. At present he seems in a somewhat sympathetic vein.

'They runs him down shocking, shocking, everywhere. Why, there 'aint a murder or a theft committed, but they lays it all to his door. I suppose, sir, he eggs 'em on, that's it. They runs him down where you came from, sir, I suppose?'

'Oh yes, but here's a gentleman wants to talk to you; he has just come from a long way off.'

'Well, what sort of a character do they give him down there? I daresay they runs him there? Ahab served him well, sir. Jeremiah used to run him. You clergymen all give him a very bad character; but what would you

do without him? Your work would all be gone!

At another time he would change over from the position of apologist, and 'run him' himself; partly on personal grounds, partly as a political economist.

'Shouldn't be blind, shouldn't be lame, if it wasn't for him. Shouldn't want prisons, shouldn't have to keep all these soldiers: see what a lot he costs us!'

He rather startled my sister on one sultry summer day, when she accosted him in passing, 'Very hot, Billy.' 'Ah,' he rejoined, 'but what must it be *there*!'

Billy's knowledge of the Bible was something very marvellous. How he probably acquired it shall be told presently. When he did turn for awhile from his favourite hero, the conversation was all of divers Scripture characters.

'The Rechabites puzzle me, sir. I suppose they must have ate and drunk something, yet they mightn't have fields or vineyards.'

'Jeroboam was a bad man. There were two of them in the Bible, sir, neither of any account. A bad lot, sir, Ahab and Jeroboam. Manasseh did repent. I can't make out Jonah.—I suppose that if you had a dozen children you wouldn't call one of them Ahab, sir?

'If I'd been Haman, I wouldn't have gone up that gallows, fifty cubits high. But I suppose they'd have made me.

'There was Job, sir, Job and his comforters! Job and his tormentors, I call 'em: didn't know anything about Job; didn't study his character. Eliphaz was the best, but *he* didn't study his character.—I can't think how I shall know Jeremiah and the rest.'

The old blind man seemed really to live in a world of Scripture characters. This was the more curious, inasmuch as he was blind.

I suppose his intimate acquaintance with them came, or was kept up, in this way. He never missed either morning or afternoon prayers at the Chapel. You might see him—some of my readers doubtless have seen him—shuffling in, doubtless looking with special zest for a chapter which should introduce '*him*.' If '*he*' were '*run*' in a sermon, it seemed rather to excite his championship for '*him*,' but still there evidently was a fascination in the subject which made it a delight rather to hear him '*run*' than not treated of at all. The most remarkable thing was that Billy knew perfectly, though blind, the proper lesson for every day, matins and evensong, in the Christian year. And more than this, he was determined that the right lesson, and no other, should be read. Thus one day, in full chapel, an unhappy Canon went to the lectern and began to read. Forthwith Billy shuffles over to him and pulls his surplice. 'It's the wrong lesson, sir.' The poor man tried to go on, but Billy persevered, until there was nothing for it but to return to the desk and look. Whereupon the mentor was seen to be right.

The old man was also a great critic on sermons. Few things offended him more than to have the proper subject of the day or season ignored.

'Mr. Moss came and preached here, preached on Advent Sunday a sermon fit for Christmas. Quite wrong. Just the same on the Epiphany. Why couldn't he preach on the subject of the day?'

He evidently disliked what has been called '*stale bread*.'

'You'll soon have a man here, sir, to preach: if I had as many guineas as I've heard him preach old sermons, I'd sit you down to the finest dinner you ever ate in your life!'

Enough of thee, Billy! These reminiscences have but the value of sketches from real life; they are worth jotting down as an instance of a peculiar idiosyncrasy, and as a record of a character well known, I doubt not, to the many visitors of Castle-town. May the hour and the day arrive to thee when evil angels and nights' shadows shall together flee from eyes and mind; and a galaxy of white, serious-eyed, sweet angels greet thy recovered vision,

'The morning shall awaken,
The shadow shall decay,
And each true hearted servant,
Shall shine as doth the day.'

And never fear but that, if thou art admitted to that glorious company of 'saints, apostles, prophets, virgins, martyrs, and evangelists,' thou shalt learn to know those old great champions whose names are with us only, but who, being dead, yet have for thee a voice so ever near at hand! Cold doctrine that of the non-recognition of friends and dear ones in the Future state; that our heart's brightest garlands shall wither without hope, nor ever revive in that more genial Land,

'Where everlasting Spring abides,
And never-withering flowers:'

—that the 'pitted speck' of death must mar the whole of our 'garnered fruit,' garnered after the finished process of Spring's blossoming, and Summer's ripening; secured, we fondly dreamed, when Autumn had matured them, mellowing and sweetening even through the keen Winter of death. *Absurd* doctrine, also, that would erase all those tender memories of one's life on earth, presenting to our heart a 'universal blank,' as the result of our painful years of probation in this brief, long life. For how could life's Drama be remembered—with the 'Dramatis

Personæ' left out? No, no, we shall remember when we meet, and 'those old woes will serve for sweet discourses in our time to come.' Should we pass through the bitter rind together and bid a sad, eternal farewell, just as we had penetrated to the kernel?

But what next do I remember, worthy of note, in my musing upon the old days spent, such a brief or such a long while ago, at noble Castle-town? Let me recall a Sunday evening there. I pass by the service in the Royal Chapel, weighted with grand histories and episodes in the lives of Kings and Princes; lined with crests and drooping banners; panelled with brasses commemorative of the knights of old; paved with stones that seem to startle us with names of old Kings and Queens here brought to us with a strange reality which they lacked on the filmy historic page. I pass by that stately service, also the pleasant morning walk with my sister across the fields, overlooked by the castellated pile, towards the quiet country church, in which she loved to worship, peaceful amid the clustered crosses, a rose-garden as well as a churchyard, protesting by its nascent Christianity against the heathen despair with which an age of mere 'morality' naturally surrounded the thought of Death. We pass together into the Church and hear the aged Ambassador, the holy man of God (no conventional term in this case), proclaiming his Master's message. Soothed, refreshed, we pass out of the luminous shade into the warm sun; we linger in the peaceful and beautiful sleeping place of the silent, expectant congregation without the Church's walls, for whom, whether they heard, or whether they forbore, appeals and warnings have for ever ceased.—Next

time that I stand in this church-yard in the warm sun—But I shall come, before I end, to that changed time. I pass on, then, to the evening of that quiet restful day.

Near Castle-town there was, at that time, and probably still exists, a noble Convalescent Hospital. It was one of a group of buildings, originated, *ad majorem gloriam Dei*, and on behalf of Christ's poor brethren, by that holy man of whom I spoke just now. My brother, having no parochial work with his minor canonry, had volunteered gladly accepted aid in the heavy and growing work of the parish. Among other things, he was accustomed to give an evening service on Sundays at this Convalescent Home. I had had a quiet Sunday, and change of place and congregation is in itself a kind of rest. I agreed to give the address that evening, my brother taking the service. The congregation may soon have forgotten the preacher; he will not soon nor easily forget the impressions of that short while of ministry among them.

A noble building, good stone and oak, built as men used to build, when they built to last and not just to let for a certain number of years; pleasure ground beautifully laid out, with provision of amusements for the convalescents, whom we saw, wan, but cared for and happy, on our former week-day visit. What a change for them, from the back-slums of London; from Seven Dials, and filth, and ugliness, and squalidity, and drunken uproars, maybe, and blasphemy, and quarrels, to this serene and tranquil home, clean, and sweet, and redolent of flower-scents and country sounds; tenderly ministrant Sisters, noiseless in step, peaceful in face; a place of rest and refreshment, an abode

of worship and prayer, where Faith led Charity by the hand, and both pointed weary eyes to sweet Hope with her heavenward raised finger. How pleasant a memory, we thought, when life's taper were flickering to extinction, to have founded or aided such a gracious institution as this! It would not be rested upon as a *merit*; cold and calculating idea! rather returned thanks for, as a *privilege*. 'Sick, and ye visited Me.' Again, 'Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye did it unto Me.' Do not the words make one glow? We wonder that it is the few, and not the many, who are eager to earn them.

Well, we went into the richly-furnished little Chapel, clad in white, the symbol of an innocence not our own, and I might note the assembly for a brief minute before the service began. A strange, unique assemblage it was. There were rough men, unaccustomed to any of the courtesies and amenities of life, used to coarseness, and roughness, and rudeness, used, as I said, to blasphemy and foul speech. But tamed (one can use no other word) by the influence of the place. Humanized, to begin with, lifted out of the brute-life by the tender and elevating influences which surrounded them, which, never obtruding their purity and sweetness, were yet the atmosphere of this new life. A new life to them; a life of pureness and tender love, and cheery hope; a life to wake, in rough men's hearts, wistful yearnings that had long lurked almost forgotten in the far-back old child-days. A humanizing influence—that must come first—you must lift the man from the brute before you can raise him towards the God. A sense of being cared for, a magic subtly conveyed by the refinement of their minis-

trants; influences, rather than words, softened, civilized these rough bodies and churlish spirits. I had heard this, and I could see it as I looked upon the quiet, nay, reverent demeanour, of this element of the gathering.

And—in touching contrast to these—there were the Children. I had seen them in their own ward, on the week-day, in their different stages of convalescence;—some, alas, marked not to advance beyond a certain stage towards this; lying, drawn and useless, on the bed, instead of racing, small foot chasing small foot, over the fields abrim with buttercups and daisies. And now, fettered in iron supports, or dragging heavily in crutches,—young things,—so sad, this seemed,—*young* things, shut out from the dance and sway, and elastic bound of youth!—must watch from the window, at best, while the others are at play in the summer meadows, or with the wealth of deep snow. Sad to contemplate, and to muse upon; yet not unhappy. God bless them! And He the great Compensator, can, and does, watch the pleased light on the wan, white faces, as they look up at the kind attendant friends, or as they busy them over their little tables with their toys. His resources are infinite: and who shall say, for instance, that a blemish of nature was not over compensated by the intellect of a POPE—the poet-mind of a BYRON? So He can compensate, and *He does*.

The heart is much touched by the contemplation of the Children's ward. 'This,' said a Sister, to the most august Lady of the Realm—(God bless her!)—'this is the department which we fear we shall have to give up—for lack of funds.' 'That,' said the Royal sympathiser, 'shall never be!'

AMEN, say I. Oh, I thought, if the bitterest theological opponents of this man of God (being parents) were to come here, and imagine the case of their own little ones lying sick, wan, friendless, homeless—and finding, provided only for the love of God, and of the little ones of His fold, such friends, such a home—truly, like Balaam, coming to curse, they would, instead, bless altogether!

Dear children. One was so afraid of death, a Sister said. But they talked of it 'as going Home'—and she passed away at last, so content, so happy, so willing. And they showed her to my sister; waxlike, serene, still—oh, so still (strange, you know, for a child)!—with a crown of daisies about her soon-crowned head, and a white lily held, like a sceptre, in her crossed palms. A brief pilgrimage—somewhat stormy at last. But then—HOME!

Well, there are some general thoughts that will redeem such musings from presenting a too special character. And we are not singular in our experiences; and, whether we laugh or mourn, there will ever be a gathering, a crowding, of intense, if unseen, sympathisers, close at our back.

Where else would be the trade of poets and of authors? We sing our thoughts, and lo! a million hearts vibrate to the thrill which stirs the strings of our own into wailing or jubilant chords. So the great human heart is brought up to one pitch; and an octave is struck in the keys to every note that any hand has awakened from its slumber; and a jar replies to every discord. And tears and smiles are really as instinctively catching as yawns, which last I would fain evade.

So, *Au revoir!*

THE TALK OF THE TOWN.

IT must be a matter of congratulation to everybody—except retail tradesmen, perhaps,—that the Season is over at last. There is usually something lively about the meeting of Parliament in February. People feel bored after their autumn holidays, and though we contrive to get on pretty well till that period of supposed domestic rejoicing, Christmas, has fairly passed, we begin to get desperate about the end of January, and welcome the advent of our noble peers and honourable members with a warmth that somewhat compensates for the chill fogs of February. We are glad to see the sayings—if not the doings—of our genial representatives duly recorded in our daily journals. We read with pleasure the polite remarks of our Granville, and study with delight the sonorous eloquence of our Gladstone, and the caustic observations of our Disraeli, whose mouth seems specially fitted for the utterance of the words ‘Her Majesty’s Opposition.’ The streets of Regent and of Bond become gay with stately equipages, and in spite of east winds and nightly frost, spring fashions strengthen our faith in better things to come as we gaze into the windows of Farmer and Rogers, Marshall and Snellgrove, Swan and Edgar, and the other giants of commerce who are good enough to provide for the satisfaction of our luxurious inclinations. But July comes, and a sense of weariness pervades our jaded spirits. The thermometer is 80 in the shade, and we remember that there are such things as green woods, rippling streams, grassy meadows, beautiful sunsets, and British peasants, and we long

to throw ourselves upon the country, however much our legislators may dislike the operation.

The talk of the town has not flagged for want of subjects for discussion. The International Exhibition was generally condemned as an International bore, though the envelope-making machines relieved its dulness somewhat, the world generally having been under an impression, apparently, that envelopes grew somewhere or other, and were adapted to common use and varied shapes in stationers’ shops. Then, too, it was certainly something to see the third edition of the *Echo* being turned off on what looked like a huge instrument of inquisitorial torture, and on one occasion I saw a compositor setting up for the *Times*. I trembled as I looked over his shoulder at the MS. before him. After all, the handwriting was like that of an ordinary man. Still, it was something to have seen, and I felt the better for it as I passed on to the Queensland Annexe; indeed, I had almost an appetite for Australian beef, but I postponed the experiment. A farthing more per pound in my butcher’s bills, and I have resolved to pay him and triumphantly flourish a tin in his astounded face.

I am free to confess that I do not look forward hopefully to these annual Internationals as likely to prove really serviceable to the interests of art. I fear that they are likely to become gigantic advertising media, and the catalogues will become puffs by implication. However, South Kensington is a very pleasant lounge, and one can go and stare at pretty things without being importuned

to buy them, and it is not quite so far off as the Crystal Palace. But why—oh, why—my Lords and gentlemen Commissioners, don't you keep your show open a little later? Poor hirelings, like myself, are not always free to go where we like till five p.m., and we should esteem it a favour if you would permit us to stop till eight o'clock, at least in summer weather. Do see if you can't manage this for us another year.

What shall I say about the Royal Academy? I trust Mr. Calderon will forgive me if I venture to say that though cold roast beef and lobsters are very well in their way, they are a little too prominent in his picture 'Summer;' had the *débris* of the picnic been more removed from the spectator's gaze, he would think less of the iced champagne and more of the fascinating young lady in the boat. Again, I look for better conceptions from Mr. Mulready than I find in 'Our Good-Natured Cousin.' This young gentleman, with a noisy girl upon either arm, is my beau idéal of a shop-boy out for the day, and the group is eminently suggestive of tea-gardens and music-halls. So, too, Mr. Havill's 'Jesuit' represents nothing more than the tolerably intellectual face of an elderly gentleman thinking about something that rather bothers him. Dare I admit that in Mr. Millais' picture, 'Flowing to the Sea,' I found myself completely absorbed by the contemplation of a gigantic Highlander in full uniform. Of this gallant soldier, I can only say, let him flow, for he appears to be several sizes too big; and if he had flowed away altogether from the artist's imagination, and carried his comrade with him in his tide,

the picture would be all the better. 'Flowing to the River' is infinitely more delightful. I envy that angler; but even he would have found some difficulty in throwing his fly from the position in which he stands. Perhaps, however, he is only a bottom-fisher: still, I envy him. To the same painter's portraits of the three Miss Armstrongs I make, as in duty bound, my most humble bow, firmly believing that such graceful young ladies can look a little more lively if occasion needs. Ah! Mr. V. Cole, how your picture of 'Noon' make us smoke-dried and gas-breathing Londoners long for our holidays! Who can gaze upon that canvas and not long for the calm rest and peace that scene promises to the weary brain? If the noon of life could be but as glorious as that noon of Nature! But from the repose of woodland and meadow we are recalled to the amenities of society by Mr. M. Stone's eminently successful treatment of the subject he has chosen—'Edward II. and his favourite, Piers Gaveston.' I commend the foolish young king to the tender mercies of Mr. Bradlaugh, who, when he or his audiences are tired of abusing the House of Brunswick, can fall back upon the Plantagenets. To my mind, Mr. Frith's 'The Miniature' is the best of that artist's contribution to the Academy. The expression of the face is admirable, and suggests the plot of a three-volumed novel at once. I should not write many more letters if I were the original of that miniature. I should be more inclined to plead urgent private affairs, and come back by a very early post. 'Daniel,' by Mr. B. Rivière, has been provocative of a considerable amount of criticism; it would be interesting to know Mr. Voysey's opinion on the sub-

ject. Daniel, standing with his hands behind his back, appears to be studying the fierce beauties of creation. Is there something of the supernatural in his face, I wonder, that prevents the hungry, angry lions from pouncing upon him? Perhaps Mr. Rivière is right in leaving that to the spectators' imagination. Mr. E. M. Ward's idea of 'The Quarrel between Captain Absolute and Lydia Languish,' is very happy. I should like to see such a Lydia Languish as that upon the stage. A charming, roguish face—half frightened at what she has said, and anxious as to what he is going to do now. 'From Generation to Generation,' by Mr. C. Calthorp, is highly suggestive and full of talent. This young artist will do better things than this some day. 'The Cradle of the Sea-Bird,' as painted by Mr. P. Graham, has its friends and foes among the critics, I observe; I am inclined to think that the hostility it has excited is founded upon reminiscences of crossing the Channel, and proceeds from persons given to sea-sickness. I take the liberty to record my humble opinion that it is a noble picture, and I sincerely wish that I could afford to buy it.

Some of Mr. Burges' designs for churches and chapels among the architectural drawings, incline me to think that certain city gentlemen, officious members of parliament, and jealous rivals, have been somewhat premature, to say the least, in their uncalled-for and contemptuous denunciation of that artist's fitness to undertake the decoration of St. Paul's Cathedral. (By-the-by, why *will* some people call St. Paul's the *Metropolitan* Cathedral? The metropolitan cathedral is to be found at the seat of the metropolitan see, which is Canterbury.) What fearful and

wonderful things there would be to be seen if the cathedral were to be decorated according to the designs and taste of the Lord Mayor and Mr. Cavendish Bentinck! 'Sprawling Saints,' we suppose, would give way to the portraits of eminently respectable aldermen, and 'angels habited as Deacons' would be supplanted by the representations of eminent M.P.'s supplied by the Stereoscopic Company, and coloured on the premises. A highly decorated pew might be furnished for the chief magistrate of the City of London by Messrs. Jackson and Graham, and a magnificently dark oak pulpit might be supplied for Protestant preaching by the upholsterers of Mr. Spurgeon's Tabernacle. These anti-mediævalists, as they please to call themselves, seem to be quite unaware that there is such a thing as ecclesiastical art, which in all ages has given to the world the noblest specimens of architecture and painting, and they would pervert a splendid Christian church into a Mansion House banquetting-saloon or a town-hall ball-room. Happily, taste and learning have not been completely slain by nineteenth-century Utilitarianism, and there is good reason to hope that in the battle of the styles, the victory will be to the beautiful and mystical, and not to the bombastical and miserable.

Mr. Frederic Harrison has recently enlivened the talk of the town to a certain extent. His article on 'The Monarchy' in the 'Fortnightly Review' for June, came like a flash of summer lightning across our social sky; but otherwise our atmosphere does not seem to be more than usually murky, nor do we think that any portentous storm is brewing; and

I must say that I gather from Mr. Harrison's gentle satire that he is not in a hurry to see his visions realized; and as he is a vigorous writer, if not the profoundest of thinkers, and as he possesses the great virtue of being good-humoured in his criticism, I can afford to express a hope that he may live to see the permanent establishment of his true republic, and that he will at the same time reveal to the world the secret which will then have kept him alive considerably beyond the allotted period of threescore years and ten.

It is curious to remark the similarity of argument between that employed by Mr. Harrison, and by the zealous ecclesiastic: 'The nation is the visible, ever-present and ultimate master,' says Mr. Harrison. 'The Church is our one mistress, and her welfare is our one desire,' exclaims the ecclesiastic; but simple folks become rather puzzled when they attempt to define either the nation or the Church. Perhaps, indeed, it is easier to say what the Church is than what the nation is. Possibly the nation may ultimately resolve itself into a question of votes, and then the ever-present and ultimate master will be nothing more than a mere numerical majority. What sort of a master this might become, it is needless to enquire. Human nature will retain its humanity even under a republic, and it is to be feared that even such a recipe will not make men less mean or less selfish. Granted, that if Mr. Harrison could have his way, and government become the embodiment of the common good, and that desire for the common good should permeate and inspire every public act, should we be very much better off than we are now?

It may be fairly presumed that

the existing government—sham democracy, wax-work sovereign, counting-house aristocracy, and all—have the welfare of the nation generally (being themselves constituent parts thereof) as much at heart as the executive of Mr. Harrison's model republic. There is a reason for every act that is passed by the legislature, and the reason is sure to be founded upon some supposed ameliorating principle which commends itself to the majority. But acts of parliament for improving purposes do not seem to be altogether to Mr. Harrison's taste. He positively makes it a subject for complaint, that we are constantly occupied in remodelling the machinery of government. Can Mr. Harrison describe any machine which has attained perfection? Why, he might as well complain of the competition between sewing-machines, or the comparative advantages of new steam-ploughs. In truth, our Republican is strangely Tory. See how extremes meet; Russia and America are complimented by Mr. Harrison on the fact that they are free from all attempts at improvement! Tinkering the constitution! Rubbish! You may as well talk of tinkering a tower when the builder is merely carrying out the ultimate designs of the architect.

And oh! my dear Mr. Harrison, I feel compelled to ask your infinite superiority if Jeames de la Pluche is not to be found squatting on the steps which lead to the garish temple where the goddess of Republics (if not of Reason) sits enshrined? Has Jeames no peculiar phraseology wherewith to describe the overwhelming virtues of the 'working man,' oblivious, in his vulgar ostentation, of the fact that it is by no means the rich only who stand idle in the market-place, and that the work

of brains fears no competition with the work of hands? Does Jeames never bow down at public meetings before 'our own flesh and blood,' and welcome them in set speech to his well-fed bosom, though he would not sit down to tea with them in the 'ousekeeper's room? Why, I know a Jeames in the House of Commons, who has put on yellow plush, and whose advocacy of republics would be sufficient of itself to support Imperialism for a century, let alone the experience of a Paris Commune. Who can doubt but that Odger is bored by toadies? Possibly even Mr. Harrison himself has seen reason for avoiding gushing demonstrations of the 'Nation,' in Trafalgar Square.

The fact is, people do not live by logic, and ideas are rarely capable of realization. Unforeseen antagonisms meet us at every turn, and the world declines to be governed by rule of thumb. He is the best philosopher, and most likely to prove useful to his generation, who takes mankind as he finds them, and endeavours to improve individual constitutions, and does not assume that there can be but one constitution, and that idiosyncracies must conform themselves to that one pattern, and that square men must be got into round holes, whether they like it or not. That Mr. Frederick Harrison is capable of giving us food for reflection I do not deny; that at least he can amuse us, I cheerfully admit; but I am constrained to hesitate before I say that his views demand immediate adoption, or that he himself is likely to prove to be a saviour of society.

A new play by a new author, produced at a first-class theatre, must necessarily afford consider-

able interest to playgoers. I own, however, that the title of Mr. Freund's drama, 'The Undergraduate,' awakened many misgivings in my mind. I remembered 'A Lesson in Life,' at the Haymarket, and though the undergraduates in that piece were just tolerable, I shuddered at the idea of the experiment being tried a second time. I thought, too, of 'Formosa,' and I sincerely wished that some judicious friend would point the moral of that anomalous production, and warn Mr. Freund that he was treading on ground that was worse than dangerous, as it might prove ridiculous. My worst fears were realized, and the wine party at Sir John Davenant's rooms, with which the first act concludes, is simply repulsive. It is possible that the author intended to caricature such social gatherings, and wished to show the young Oxonian how contemptible all boyish excesses are; but I think every Oxford man will refuse to recognise the fidelity of the picture, satirical though it be; composed as it is of figures about as unlike the ordinary undergraduate as it is possible to conceive. The fact is, the representation of such scenes is beyond theatrical art; they cannot be managed upon the stage with any degree of truthfulness, and I dare say Mr. Freund himself has been fully convinced of his mistake, and has resolved to try for something better next time, when I have no doubt he will achieve a more unequivocal success.

One word as to another new drama that was presented to the public in the month of June. Mr. Hastings, the able stage-manager of the Prince of Wales' Theatre, produced for his benefit one Saturday afternoon at the Gaiety, a play in three acts, called, 'The Old Forge,' which met with

a most cordial reception. Mr. Hastings enjoys the enviable reputation of benevolently assisting aspirants to dramatic fame who are unable to gain a manager's attention, or an audience in the greenroom; and I am bound to say that on this occasion, at all events, the drama he produced was fully worth the risk. The story which the author, Mr. Charles Osborne, has clothed with dramatic form, is not, perhaps, entitled to much merit on the score of originality; but the construction of the play is good, and the interest well-sustained. The principal character was played by Mr. J. Clarke, whom play-goers are rejoiced to welcome in a part more worthy of his talents than the low comedy and burlesque in which they have been accustomed to see him perform.

Mr. Fechter has appeared again in 'Hamlet.' I cannot but think that he would have done wisely to have appeared in some new character. Those of us who remember the first night when this actor made the experiment which proved to be such a great success, can only feel something of sadness when they go to the Princess's Theatre now and witness Mr. Fechter's performance in a 'star-ring' engagement. The tragedy is put upon the stage in the most pitiful way, and one almost expects to see the ghost of Mr. Charles Kean appear upon the stage instead of Hamlet's father, and rebuke the management and everybody concerned, for presenting such a miserable Shakspearian revival. Surely, if Mr. Chatterton can afford to spend so much money on the scenic arrangements of a dramatised version of a Waverley novel, he need not be quite so parsimonious when he deals with Shakspeare. But I forgot, Mr. Chatterton has informed us, if I remem-

ber right, that Shakspeare spells ruin; and hence this meagre *mise en scène*. Still, for his own credit, he might surely have cast the play a little better.

Dramatic considerations lead me to mention the fact that Messrs. Sotheran and Baer are republishing the works of the 'Dramatists of the Reformation.' The first volume lies before me now, and it contains five of Sir William D'Avenant's plays; two tragedies, a tragi-comedy, and two masques. The prefatory memoir is by no means the least interesting portion of the book; and it will prove most useful to professional dramatic critics. Of the plays I can only say that to our modern tastes they are by no means fitted for indiscriminate reading, still less for stage representation. Messrs. Sotheran and Baer, no doubt, work hard in the cause of literature, and their efforts are to be commended, but we were sufficiently scandalised by the reproduction of the works of Mrs. Aphra Behn, and we are compelled to admit that a little Bowdlerisation would not be altogether out of place in editing the plays of Sir William D'Avenant. I am quite as willing as Mr. Charles Reade to call a spade a spade, and confess that a vast amount of social squeamishness is arrant humbug; and that if vice is to be successfully grappled with, it must not be concealed by rose-coloured curtains, but must be held up to public hatred, contempt, and ridicule. Still, there is a wide gulf between Holywell Street and Paternoster Row, and no literary plea can excuse the publication of certain lines, which are remarkable neither for beauty of thought or language; and which plain people are compelled to call simply obscene. At the same time it is impossible to deny that there

is a great deal in these plays which the dramatist of to-day might study with advantage. Our modern playwrights seem to delight in reproducing in their dialogue the ordinary conversation of the five o'clock tea-party and club, sharpened by rudeness which is mistaken for brilliancy, and by laboured repartee which is made to pass for wit. If we find the dull glare of coarseness in the dialogues of our great dramatists, we at least find deep thought, and frequent conversations of refined humour, which we seek for now-a-days in vain. The gleam of dramatic poetry on the modern stage is overshadowed by the cloud of prose, which introduces the spectator to the sensational incident, and the development of character is subordinated to the necessities of 'situation.' How long this will last it is impossible to say; at present there are but the faintest signs of a desire to return to a better and a healthier state of things.

One of these plays, 'The Cruel Brother,' was published in 1630. Remembering the date, the following extracted lines are not without interest at the present time:—

'Fruit that is ripe
Is prone to fall, or to corrupt itself.
According to the age of monarchies
They now are fully ripe: they reach
The height and top of mental faculties.
Nature in them doth stand upon the
verge
Of her own youth. The English want
Three hundred years of that perfection.
And as the moon ne'er changes but i'th
full,
Even so the mighty nations of the earth
Change in their greatest glory. First,
their strict
And rugged discipline to vain delights;
Their solemn marches next to wanton jigs:
Their battels fierce to duels splenetic,
Or witty quarrels of the pen.'

I trust that the ladies will forgive me if I venture to commend to their attention a paper in the

'Contemporary Review,' for June, by Dr. Littledale, on 'the Religious Education of Women.' I assure them that they will find in this article some very unpleasant truths, but some very sound common sense; and I think that the more reflective portions of womankind in England will not be disposed to quarrel with the sentiments and conclusions of the reverend doctor. The writer is most properly severe upon the notion that a woman ought to be religious because she is a woman, and because men don't like to see a total want of religion in the opposite sex. 'If,' says Dr. Littledale, 'religion is merely to come in as an adjunct to music and dancing, in order to tempt men into an investment, because the article offered can be warranted docile and domesticated, as well as accomplished, one hardly sees why it should be ranked any higher than such pursuits.' No greater insult, to my mind, can be offered to women—that is, to our mothers, sisters, wives, and daughters—than to say that they, at all events, ought to be religious. This means, simply, that they ought to be superstitious, and that superstition is necessary for the proper guidance of their minds. Religion is that which binds man to a personal God; and if there is a personal God, religion is just as necessary for a man as for a woman. Nay, if the notion of God be merely the embodiment or ideal of truth, liberality, wisdom, justice, purity and love, a man is bound not to allow a woman to exceed him in piety; and herein we see the absurdity and falsity of branding the devotional element in man as distinctly feminine. Controversy has, in these days, unfortunately (perhaps for Christianity), become fashionable; and the shibboleths of sect and party are loudly heard round the dinner

table and in the ball room. Ladies are as keen about ecclesiastical politics, as they were in former days about profane politics, when the extra patch upon the cheek denoted the Tory or the Whig. The most solemn mysteries of faith are handled in conversational manner; we are asked our opinion as to the damnatory clauses in the Athanasian Creed during soup; Mr. Purchas is the subject of conversation over an entrée, and Monsignor Capel is discussed in the progress of a quadrille; and I am bound to say that *decolletées* damsels, who delight in introducing these topics, have usually but little reason to give for the principles they have violently embraced. Fashionable preachers have much to answer for. Belgravian mothers do not mind having their ears tickled by eloquent denunciations of the morals of Mayfair; and Belgravian daughters listen with complacency to the fluent rhetoric which condemns the pomps and vanities of this wicked world. The fashionable preacher is, too

frequently, the cause of the fashionable *dévoté*, and Séraphine's fasts and festivals are not incompatible with her luxuries and lovers.

Four other canons laid down by Dr. Littledale, I beg leave to quote, and leave them to the consideration of those whom they may concern.

1. A woman should be taught her direct personal responsibility, and the impossibility of shifting this off upon any person or system exterior to herself.

2. The methodization of time, as a religious duty, to prevent waste of powers and opportunities for good.

3. Concentration of religious aim. I mean, setting her belief to do definite work, instead of using it as an emotional safety-valve to let off steam.

4. Two maxims very necessary for these times, that as doubt does not necessarily denote strength or impartiality, so neither does vehement assertion involve certainty or principle.

FREE LANCE.







[Frontispiece

A SEPTEMBER PICNIC.

Drawn by G. Flowers.]

LONDON SOCIETY.

SEPTEMBER, 1872.

A SIMPLETON.

A Story of the Day.

BY CHARLES READE.

[At the Author's particular request this story is not illustrated.]

CHAPTER III.

THE young physician walked steadily up to his patient without taking his eye off her, and drew a chair to her side.

Then she took down one hand—the left—and gave it him, averting her face tenderly, and still covering it with her right—‘For,’ said she to herself, ‘I am such a fright now.’ This opportune reflection, and her heaving bosom, proved that she at least felt herself something more than his patient. Her pretty consciousness made his task more difficult: nevertheless, he only allowed himself to press her hand tenderly with both his palms one moment, and then he entered on his functions bravely. ‘I am here as your physician.’

‘Very well,’ said she, softly.

He gently detained the hand, and put his finger lightly to her pulse; it was palpitating, and a fallacious test: oh, how that beating pulse, by love’s electric current, set his own heart throbbing in a moment!

He put her hand gently, reluctantly down; and said, ‘Oblige me by turning this way.’ She turned, and he winced internally

at the change in her; but his face betrayed nothing. He looked at her full; and, after a pause, put her some questions: one was as to the colour of the hemorrhage. She said it was bright red.

‘Not a tinge of purple?’

‘No,’ said she, hopefully, mistaking him.

He suppressed a sigh.

Then he listened at her shoulder-blade, and at her chest, and made her draw her breath while he was listening. The acts were simple, and usual in medicine, but there was a deep, patient, silent intensity about his way of doing them.

Mr. Lusignan crept nearer, and stood with both hands on a table, and his old head bowed, awaiting, yet dreading the verdict.

Up to this time, Dr. Staines, instead of tapping, and squeezing, and pulling the patient about, had never touched her with his hand, and only grazed her with his ear: but now he said, ‘Allow me,’ and put both hands to her waist, more lightly and reverently than I can describe: ‘Now draw a deep breath, if you please.’

‘There!’

'If you could draw a deeper still,' said he, insinuatingly.

'There then,' said she, a little pettishly.

Dr. Staines's eye kindled.

'Hum!' said he. Then, after a considerable pause—'Are you better, or worse, after each hemorrhage?'

'La!' said Rosa; 'they never asked me that. Why, better.'

'No faintness?'

'Not a bit.'

'Rather a sense of relief, perhaps?'

'Yes. I feel lighter, and better.'

The examination was concluded.

Dr. Staines looked at Rosa, and then at her father. The agony in that aged face, and the love that agony implied, won him, and it was to the parent he turned to give his verdict.

'The hemorrhage is from the lungs—'

Lusignan interrupted him: 'From the lungs!' cried he, in dismay.

'Yes; a slight congestion of the lungs.'

'But not incurable! Oh! not incurable, doctor!'

'Heaven forbid! It is curable—easily—by removing the cause.'

'And what is the cause?'

'The cause?'—He hesitated, and looked rather uneasy—'Well, the cause, sir, is—tight stays.'

The tranquillity of the meeting was instantly disturbed. 'Tight stays! Me!' cried Rosa. 'Why I am the loosest girl in England. Look, papa! And, without any apparent effort, she drew herself in, and poked her little fist between her sash and her gown. 'There!'

Dr. Staines smiled sadly and a little sarcastically: he was evidently shy of encountering the lady in this argument; but he was more at his ease with her father; so he turned towards him and lectured him freely.

'That is wonderful, sir; and the first four or five female patients that favoured me with it, made me disbelieve my other senses; but Miss Lusignan is now about the thirtieth who has shown me that marvellous feat, with a calm countenance that belies the Herculean effort. Nature has her every-day miracles: a boa-constrictor, diameter seventeen inches, can swallow a buffalo; a woman, with her stays bisecting her almost, and lacerating her skin, can yet for one moment make herself seem slack, to deceive a juvenile physician. The snake is the miracle of expansion; the woman is the prodigy of contraction.'

'Highly grateful for the comparison!' said Rosa. 'Women and snakes!'

Dr. Staines blushed, and looked uncomfortable. 'I did not mean to be offensive; it certainly was a very clumsy comparison.'

'What does that matter?' said Mr. Lusignan, impatiently. 'Be quiet, Rosa, and let Dr. Staines and me talk sense.'

'Oh! then I am nobody in the business!' said this wise young lady.

'You are everybody,' said Staines, soothingly. 'But,' suggested he, obsequiously, 'if you don't mind, I would rather explain my views to your father—on this one subject.'

'And a pretty subject it is.'

Doctor Staines then invited Mr. Lusignan to his lodgings, and promised to explain the matter anatomically. 'Meantime,' said he, 'would you be good enough to put your hands to my waist, as I did to the patient's.'

Mr. Lusignan complied; and the patient began to titter directly, to put them out of countenance.

'Please observe what takes place when I draw a full breath.'

'Now apply the same test to

the patient. Breathe your best, please, Miss Lusignan.'

The patient put on a face full of saucy mutiny.

'To oblige us both.'

'Oh! how tiresome!'

'I am aware it is rather laborious,' said Staines, a little drily; 'but, to oblige your father!'

'Oh, anything to oblige papa,' said she, spitefully. 'There!—And I do hope it will be the last—la! no; I don't hope that, neither.'

Doctor Staines politely ignored her little attempts to interrupt the argument. 'You found, sir, that the muscles of my waist, and my intercostal ribs themselves, rose and fell with each inhalation, and exhalation, of air by the lungs.'

'I did; but my daughter's waist was like dead wood, and so were her lower ribs.'

At this volunteer statement, Rosa coloured to her temples. 'Thanks, papa! Pack me off to London, and sell me for a big doll!'

'In other words,' said the lecturer, mild and pertinacious, 'with us the lungs have room to blow, and the whole bony frame expands elastic with them, like the woodwork of a blacksmith's bellows; but with this patient, and many of her sex, that noble and divinely-framed bellows is crippled and confined by a powerful machine of human construction; so it works lamely and feebly: consequently too little air, and of course too little oxygen, passes through that spongy organ whose very life is air. Now mark the special result in this case: being otherwise healthy and vigorous, our patient's system sends into the lungs more blood than that one crippled organ can deal with; a small quantity becomes extravasated at odd times; it accumulates, and would become

dangerous; then Nature, strengthened by sleep, and by some hours' relief from the diabolical engine, makes an effort, and flings it off: that is why the hemorrhage comes in the morning, and why she is the better for it, feeling neither faint nor sick, but relieved of a weight. This, sir, is the *rationale* of the complaint; and it is to you I must look for the cure. To judge from my other female patients, and from the few words Miss Lusignan has let fall, I fear we must not count on any very hearty co-operation from her: but you are her father, and have great authority; I conjure you to use it to the full, as you once used it—to my sorrow—in this very room. I am forgetting my character. I was asked here only as her physician. Good-evening.'

He gave a little gulp, and hurried away, with an abruptness that touched the father, and offended the sapient daughter.

However, Mr. Lusignan followed him, and stopped him before he left the house, and thanked him warmly; and, to his surprise, begged him to call again in a day or two.

'Well Rosa! what do you say?'

'I say that I am very unfortunate in my doctors. Mr. Wyman is a chatterbox, and knows nothing. Dr. Snell is Mr. Wyman's echo. Christopher is a genius, and they are always full of crotchets. A pretty doctor! Gone away, and not prescribed for me!'

Mr. Lusignan admitted it was odd. 'But, after all,' said he, 'if medicine does you no good?'

'Ah, but any medicine he had prescribed would have done me good: and that makes it all the unkindler.'

'If you think so highly of his

skill, why not take his advice? it can do no harm.'

'No harm? Why if I was to leave them off I should catch a dreadful cold; and that would be sure to settle on my chest, and carry me off, in my present delicate state. Besides, it is so unfeminine not to wear them.'

This staggered Mr. Lusignan, and he was afraid to press the point; but what Staines had said fermented in his mind.

Dr. Snell and Mr. Wyman continued their visits, and their prescriptions.

The patient got a little worse.

Mr. Lusignan hoped Christopher would call again: but he did not.

When Dr. Staines had satisfied himself that the disorder was easily curable, then wounded pride found an entrance even into his loving heart. That two strangers should have been consulted, before him! He was only sent for, because they could not cure her.

As he seemed in no hurry to repeat his visit, Mr. Lusignan called on him, and said, politely, he had hoped to receive another call ere this. 'Personally,' said he, 'I was much struck with your observations: but my daughter is afraid she will catch cold if she leaves off her corset, and that, you know, might be very serious.'

Dr. Staines groaned. And, when he had groaned, he lectured. 'Female patients are wonderfully monotonous in this matter; they have a programme of evasions; and, whether the patient is a lady, or a housemaid, she seldom varies from that programme. You find her breathing life's air, with half a bellows, and you tell her so. "Oh no," says she; and does the gigantic feat of contraction we witnessed that evening at your house. But, on inquiry, you learn there is a raw red line ploughed in her flesh

by the cruel stays. "What is that?" you ask, and flatter yourself you have pinned her. Not a bit. "That was the last pair. I changed them, because they hurt me." Driven out of that, by proofs of recent laceration, they say "If I leave them off I should catch my death of cold," which is equivalent to saying there is no flannel in the shops, no common sense nor needles at home.'

He then laid before him some large French plates, showing the organs of the human trunk, and bade him observe in how small a space, and with what skill, the Creator has packed so many large, yet delicate organs, so that they shall be free, and secure from friction, though so close to each other. He showed him the liver, an organ weighing four pounds, and of large circumference, the lungs, a very large organ suspended in the chest and impatient of pressure; the heart, the stomach, the spleen, all of them too closely and artfully packed to bear any further compression.

Having thus taken him by the eye, he took him by the mind.

'Is it a small thing for the creature to say to her Creator, "I can pack all this egg-china better than you can," and thereupon to jam all those vital organs close, by a powerful, a very powerful and ingenious machine? Is it a small thing for that sex, which, for good reasons, the Omniscent has made larger in the waist than the male, to say to her Creator, "You don't know your business; women ought to be smaller in the waist than men, and shall be throughout the civilized world?"'

In short, he delivered so many true and pointed things on this trite subject, that the old gentleman was convinced, and begged him to come over that very evening and convince Rosa.

Dr. Staines shook his head, dolefully, and all his fire died out of him at having to face the fair. 'Reason will be wasted. Authority is the only weapon. My profession and my reading have both taught me that the whole character of her sex undergoes a change the moment a man interferes with their dress. From Chaucer's day to our own, neither public satire, nor private remonstrance, has ever shaken any of their monstrous fashions. Easy, obliging, pliable, and weaker of will than men in other things, do but touch their dress, however objectionable, and rock is not harder, iron is not more stubborn, than these soft and yielding creatures. It is no earthly use my coming.—I'll come.'

He came that very evening, and saw directly she was worse. 'Of course,' said he, sadly, 'you have not taken my advice.'

Rosa replied with a toss and an evasion, 'I was not worth a prescription!'

'A physician can prescribe without sending his patient to the druggist: and, when he does, then it is his words are gold.'

Rosa shook her head with an air of lofty incredulity.

He looked ruefully at Mr. Lushington, and was silent. Rosa smiled sarcastically; she thought he was at his wit's end.

Not quite: he was cudgelling his brains in search of some horribly unscientific argument, that might prevail; for he felt science would fall dead upon so fair an antagonist. At last his eye kindled; he had hit on an argument unscientific enough for anybody, he thought. Said he, ingratiatingly, 'You believe the Old Testament?'

'Of course I do. Every syllable.'

'And the lessons it teaches?'

'Certainly.'

'Then let me tell you a story

from that book. A Syrian general had a terrible disease. He consulted Elisha, by deputy. Elisha said, "Bathe seven times in a certain river, Jordan, and you will get well." The general did not like this at all; he wanted a prescription; wanted to go to the druggist; didn't believe in hydro-pathy to begin, and, in any case, turned up his nose at Jordan. What, bathe in an Israelitish brook, when his own country boasted noble rivers, with a reputation for sanctity into the bargain? In short, he preferred his leprosy to such irregular medicine. But it happened, by some immense fortuity, that one of his servants, though an Oriental, was a friend, instead of a flatterer; and this sensible fellow said, 'If the prophet told you to do some great and difficult thing, to get rid of this fearful malady, would not you do it, however distasteful? and can you hesitate when he merely says, "Wash in Jordan, and be healed?"' The general listened to good sense, and cured himself. Your case is parallel: You would take quantities of foul medicine, you would submit to some painful operation, if life and health depended on it; then why not do a small thing, for a great result? you have only to take off an unnatural machine, which cripples your growing frame, and was unknown to every one of the women, whose forms in Parian marble the world admires. Off with that monstrosity, and your cure is as certain as the Syrian general's; though science, and not inspiration, dictates the easy remedy.'

Rosa had listened impatiently, and now replied with some warmth, 'This is shockingly profane. The idea of comparing yourself to Elisha! and me to a horrid leper! Much obliged. Not that I know what a leper is.'

'Come, come, that is not fair,' said Mr. Lusignan. 'He only compared the situation, not the people.'

'But, papa, the Bible is not to be dragged into the common affairs of life.'

'Then what on earth is the use of it?'

'Oh, papa!—Well, it is not Sunday; but I have had a sermon. This is the clergyman; and you are the commentator;—he! he! And so now let us go back from divinity to medicine. I repeat' (this was the first time she had said it) 'that my other doctors give me real prescriptions, written in hieroglyphics. You can't look at them, without feeling there *must* be something in them.'

An angry spot rose on Christopher's cheek; but he only said, 'And are your other doctors satisfied with the progress your disorder is making under their superintendence?'

'Perfectly. Papa, tell him what they say, and I'll find him their prescriptions.' She went to a drawer, and rummaged, affecting not to listen.

Lusignan complied. 'First of all, sir, I must tell you they are confident it is not the lungs, but the liver.'

'The what!' shouted Christopher.

'Ah!' screamed Rosa. 'Oh, don't!—bawling!'

'And don't you screech,' said her father, with a look of misery and apprehension impartially distributed on the resounding pair.

'You must have misunderstood them,' murmured Staines, in a voice that was now barely audible a yard off. 'The hemorrhage of a bright red colour, and expelled without effort or nausea?'

'From the liver—they have assured me again and again,' said Lusignan.

Christopher's face still wore a look of blank amazement, till Rosa herself confirmed it positively.

Then he cast a look of agony upon her, and started up in a passion, forgetting, once more, that his host abhorred the sonorous. 'Oh shame! shame!' he cried, 'that the noble profession of medicine should be disgraced by ignorance such as this.' Then he said, sternly, 'Sir, do not mistake my motives; but I decline to have anything further to do with this case, until those two gentlemen have been relieved of it; and, as this is very harsh, and on my part, unprecedented, I will give you one reason out of many I *could* give you. Sir, there is no road from the liver to the throat by which blood can travel in this way, defying the laws of gravity; and they knew, from the patient, that no strong expellent force has ever been in operation. Their diagnosis, therefore, implies agnososis, or ignorance too great to be forgiven. I will not share my patient with two gentlemen who know so little of medicine, and know nothing of anatomy, which is the A B C of medicine. Can I see their prescriptions?'

These were handed to him. 'Good heavens!' said he, 'have you taken all these?'

'Most of them.'

'Why then you have drunk about two gallons of unwholesome liquids, and eaten a pound or two of unwholesome solids. These medicines have co-operated with the malady. The disorder lies, not in the hemorrhage, but in the precedent extravasation; that is a drain on the system; and how is the loss to be supplied? Why by taking a little more nourishment than before; there is no other way; and probably Nature, left to herself, might have increased your appetite to meet the

occasion. But those two worthies have struck that weapon out of Nature's hand; they have peppered away at the poor ill-used stomach, with drugs and draughts, not very deleterious I grant you, but all more or less indigestible, and all tending, not to whet the appetite, but to clog the stomach, or turn the stomach, or pester the stomach, and so impair the appetite, and so co-operate, indirectly, with the malady.'

'This is good sense,' said Lusignan. 'I declare I—I wish I knew how to get rid of them.'

'Oh, I'll do that, papa.'

'No, no; it is not worth a rumpus.'

'I'll do it too politely for that. Christopher, you are very clever; terribly clever. Whenever I threw their medicines away, I was always a little better that day. I will sacrifice them to you. It is a sacrifice. They are both so kind and chatty, and don't grudge me hieroglyphics; now you do.'

She sat down and wrote two sweet letters, to Dr. Snell and Mr. Wyman, thanking them for the great attention they had paid her; but, finding herself getting steadily worse, in spite of all they had done for her, she proposed to discontinue her medicines for a time, and try change of air.

'And suppose they call to see whether you are changing the air?'

'In that case, papa—"not at home."'

The notes were addressed and despatched.

Then Dr. Staines brightened up, and said to Lusignan, 'I am now happy to tell you that I have over-rated the malady. The sad change I see in Miss Lusignan is partly due to the great bulk of unwholesome esculents she has been eating and drinking under the head of medicines. These discontinued, she

might linger on for years, existing, though not living—the tight-laced cannot be said to live. But, if she would be healthy and happy, let her throw that diabolical machine into the fire. It is no use asking her to loosen it; she can't. Once there, the temptation is too strong. Off with it, and, take my word, you will be one of the healthiest and most vigorous young ladies in Europe.'

Rosa looked rueful, and almost sullen. She said she had parted with her doctors for him, but she really could not go about without stays. 'They are as loose as they can be. See!'

'That part of the programme is disposed of,' said Christopher. 'Please go on to No. 2. How about the raw red line where the loose machine has sawed your skin?'

'What red line? Oh! oh! oh! Somebody or other has been peeping in at my window. I'll have the ivy cut down to-morrow.'

'Simpleton!' said Mr. Lusignan, angrily. 'You have let the cat out of the bag. There is such a mark, then, and this extraordinary young man has discerned it with the eye of science.'

'He never discerned it at all,' said Rosa, red as fire; 'and, what is more, he never will.'

'I don't want to. I should be very sorry to. I hope it will be gone in a week.'

'I wish you were gone now; exposing me in this cruel way,' said Rosa, angry with herself for having said an idiotic thing, and furious with him for having made her say it.

'Oh, Rosa!' said Christopher, in a voice of tenderest reproach.

But Mr. Lusignan interfered promptly. 'Rosa, no noise. I will not have you snapping at your best friend and mine. If you are excited, you had better retire to

your own room and compose yourself. I hate a clamour.'

Rosa made a wry face at this rebuke, and then began to cry quietly.

Every tear was like a drop of blood from Christopher's heart. 'Pray don't scold her, sir,' said he, ready to snivel himself. 'She meant nothing unkind: it is only her pretty sprightly way; and she did not really imagine a love so reverent as mine—'

'Don't *you* interfere between my father and me,' said this reasonable young lady, now in an ungovernable state of feminine irritability.

'No, Rosa,' said Christopher, humbly. 'Mr. Lusignan,' said he, 'I hope you will tell her that, from the very first, I was unwilling to enter on this subject with *her*. Neither she nor I can forget my double character. I have not said half as much to her as I ought, being her physician; and yet you see I have said more than she can bear from me, who, she knows, love her and revere her. Then, once for all, do pray let me put this delicate matter into your hands: it is a case for parental authority.'

'Unfettered tyranny, that means,' said Rosa. 'What business have gentlemen interfering in such things? It is unheard of. I will not submit to it, even from papa.'

'Well, you need not scream at me,' said Mr. Lusignan; and he shrugged his shoulders to Staines. 'She is impracticable, you see. If I do my duty, there will be a disturbance.'

Now this roused the bile of Doctor Staines. 'What, sir,' said he, 'you could separate her and me by your authority, here in this very room; and yet, when her life is at stake, you abdicate. You could part her from a man who loved her with every drop of his

heart, and she said she loved him, or, at all events, preferred him to others—and you cannot part her from a miserable corset, although you see, in her poor wasted face, that it is carrying her to the churchyard! In that case, sir, there is but one thing for you to do; withdraw your opposition and let me marry her. As her lover I am powerless: but invest me with a husband's authority, and good-bye corset! You will soon see the roses return to her cheek, and her elastic figure expanding, and her eye beaming with health and physical happiness.'

Mr. Lusignan made an answer neither of his hearers expected. He said, 'I have a great mind to take you at your word. I am too old and fond of quiet to drive a Simpleton in single harness.'

This contemptuous speech, and, above all, the word Simpleton, which had been applied to her pretty freely by young ladies at school, and always galled her terribly, inflicted so intolerable a wound on Rosa's vanity, that she was ready to burst: on that, of course, her stays contributed their mite of physical uneasiness. Thus irritated, mind and body, she burned to strike in return; and, as she could not slap her father in the presence of another, she gave it Christopher backhanded.

'You can turn me out of doors,' said she, 'if you are tired of your daughter; but I am not such a *simpleton* as to marry a tyrant. No: he has shown the cloven foot in time. A husband's *authority*, indeed!' Then she turned her hand, and gave it him direct. 'You told me a different story when you were paying your court to me; then, you were to be my servant; all hypocritical sweetness. You had better go and marry a Circassian slave. They don't wear stays, and they do

wear trousers; so she will be unfeminine enough, even for you. No English lady would let her husband dictate to her about such a thing. I can have as many husbands as I like, without falling into the clutches of a tyrant. You are a rude, indelicate—— And so please understand it is all over between you and me.'

Both her auditors stood aghast, for she uttered this conclusion with a dignity of which the opening gave no promise, and the occasion, weighed in masculine balances, was not worthy.

'You do not mean that. You cannot mean it,' said Dr. Staines, aghast.

'I do mean it,' said she, firmly; 'and, if you are a gentleman, you will not compel me to say it twice—three times, I mean.'

At this dagger-stroke Christopher turned very pale, but he maintained his dignity. 'I am a gentleman,' said he, quietly, 'and a very unfortunate one. Good-bye, sir; thank you kindly. Good-bye, Rosa; God bless you. Oh, pray take a thought. Remember, your life and death are in your own hand now. I am powerless.'

And he left the house in sorrow, and just, but not pettish, indignation.

When he was gone, father and daughter looked at each other, and there was the silence that succeeds a storm.

Rosa, feeling the most uneasy, was the first to express her satisfaction. 'There, *he* is gone; and I am glad of it. Now you and I shall never quarrel again. I was quite right. Such impertinence! Such indelicacy! A fine prospect for me if I had married such a man! However, he is gone, and so there's an end of it. The idea! telling a young lady, before her father, she is tight-laced. If you had not been there I could have

forgiven him. But I am not; it is a story. Now,' suddenly exalting her voice, 'I know you believe him!'

'I say nothing,' whispered papa, hoping to still her by example. This *ruse* did not succeed.

'But you look volumes,' cried she; and I can't bear it. I won't bear it. If you don't believe *me*, ask my *maid*.' And with this felicitous speech, she rang the bell.

'You'll break the wire if you don't mind,' suggested her father, piteously.

'All the better! Why should not wires be broken as well as my heart? Oh, here she is. Now, Harriet, come here.'

'Yes, miss.'

'And tell the truth. *Am* I tight-laced?'

Harriet looked in her face a moment to see what was required of her, and then said, 'That you are not, miss. I never dressed a young lady as wore 'em easier than you do.'

'There, papa. That will do, Harriet.'

Harriet retired as far as the key-hole; she saw something was up.

'Now,' said Rosa, 'you see I was right; and, after all, it was a match you did not approve. Well, it is all over, and now you may write to your favourite, Colonel Bright. If he comes here, I'll box his old ears. I hate him. I hate them all. Forgive your wayward girl. I'll stay with you all my days. I daresay that will not be long, now I have quarrelled with my guardian angel: and all for what. Papa! papa! how *can* you sit there and not speak me one word of comfort? "*Simpleton*!" Ah! that I am, to throw away a love a queen is scarcely worthy of: and all for what? Really if it wasn't for the ingratitude and wickedness of the thing, it is too

laughable. Ha! ha!—oh! oh! oh!—ha! ha! ha!

And off she went into hysterics, and began to gulp and choke frightfully.

Her father cried for help, in dismay. In ran Harriet, saw, and screamed, but did not lose her head. This veracious person whipped a pair of scissors off the table, and cut the young lady's staylaces directly. Then there was a burst of imprisoned beauty; a deep, deep sigh of relief came from a bosom that would have done honour to Diana; and the scene soon concluded with fits of harmless weeping, renewed at intervals.

When it had settled down to this, her father, to soothe her, said he would write to Doctor Staines, and bring about a reconciliation if she liked.

'No,' said she, 'you shall kill me, sooner. I should die of shame.'

She added, 'Oh, pray, from this hour, never mention his name to me.'

And then she had another cry.

Mr. Lusignan was a sensible man: he dropped the subject for the present: but he made up his mind to one thing; that he would never part with Dr. Staines as a physician.

Next day Rosa kept her own room until dinner-time, and was as unhappy as she deserved to be. She spent her time in sewing on stiff flannel linings, and crying. She half hoped Christopher would write to her, so that she might write back that she forgave him. But not a line.

At half-past six her volatile mind took a turn, real or affected. She would cry no more for an ungrateful fellow—ungrateful for not seeing through the stone walls how she had been employed all the morning; and making it up—so

she bathed her red eyes, made a great alteration in her dress, and came dancing into the room, humming an Italian ditty.

As they were sitting together in the dining-room after dinner, two letters came by the same post to Mr. Lusignan—from Mr. Wyman and Dr. Snell.

Mr. Wyman's letter:

'DEAR SIR,

'I am sorry to hear from Miss Lusignan that she intends to discontinue medical advice. The disorder was progressing favourably, and nothing to be feared, under proper treatment.

'Yours, etc.'

Dr. Snell's letter:

'DEAR SIR,

'Miss Lusignan has written to me somewhat impatiently, and seems disposed to dispense with my visits. I do not, however, think it right to withdraw, without telling you candidly that this is an unwise step. Your daughter's health is in a very precarious condition.

'Yours, etc.'

Rosa burst out laughing. 'I have nothing to fear; and I'm on the brink of the grave. That comes of writing without a consultation. If they had written at one table, I should have been neither well nor ill. Poor Christopher!' and her sweet face began to work piteously.

'There; there: drink a glass of wine.'

She did, and a tear with it, that ran into the glass like lightning.

Warned by this that grief sat very near the bright hilarious surface, Mr. Lusignan avoided all emotional subjects for the present. Next day, however, he told her she might dismiss her lover, but no power should make him dis-

miss his pet physician, unless her health improved.

'I will not give you that excuse for inflicting him on me again,' said the young hypocrite.

She kept her word. She got better, and better, stronger, brighter, gayer.

She took to walking every day, and increasing the distance, till she could walk ten miles without fatigue.

Her favourite walk was to a certain cliff that commanded a noble view of the sea: to get to it she must pass through the town of Gravesend; and we may be sure she did not pass so often through that city without some idea of meeting the lover she had used so ill, and eliciting an *apology* from him. Sly puss!

When she had walked twenty times, or thereabouts, through the town, and never seen him, she began to fear she had offended him past hope. Then she used to cry at the end of every walk.

But by and by bodily health, vanity, and temper, combined to rouse the defiant spirit. Said she, 'If he really loved me, he would not take me at my word in such a hurry. And, besides, why does he not watch me, and find out what I am doing, and where I walk?'

At last she really began to persuade herself that she was an ill-used and slighted girl. She was very angry at times, and disconsolate at others; a mixed state in which hasty and impulsive young ladies commit life-long follies.

Mr. Lusignan observed the surface only: he saw his invalid daughter getting better every day, till at last she became a picture of health and bodily vigour. Relieved of his fears, he troubled his head but little about Christopher Staines. Yet he esteemed him,

and had got to like him; but Rosa was a beauty, and could do better than marry a struggling physician, however able. He launched out into a little gaiety, resumed his quiet dinner parties; and, after some persuasion, took his now blooming daughter to a ball given by the officers at Chat-ham.

She was the belle of the ball, beyond dispute, and danced with ethereal grace and athletic endurance. She was madly fond of waltzing, and here she encountered, what she was pleased to call, a divine dancer. It was a Mr. Reginald Falcon, a gentleman who had retired to the seaside to recruit his health and finances, sore tried by London and Paris. Falcon had run through his fortune; but had acquired, in the process, certain talents, which as they cost the acquirer dear, so they sometimes repay him, especially if he is not over-burdened with principle, and adopts the notion that, the world having plucked him, he has a right to pluck the world. He could play billiards well, but never so well as when backing himself for a heavy stake. He could shoot pigeons well, and his shooting improved under that which makes some marksmen miss, a heavy bet against the gun. He danced to perfection; and, being a well-bred, experienced, brazen, adroit fellow, who knew a little of everything that was going, he had always plenty to say: above all, he had made a particular study of the fair sex; had met with many successes, many rebuffs, and at last, by keen study of their minds, and a habit he had acquired of watching their faces, and shifting his helm accordingly, had learned the great art of pleasing them. They admired his face; to me, the short space between his eyes and his

hair, his aquiline nose, and thin straight lips, suggested the bird of prey a little too much: but to fair doves, born to be clutched, this similitude perhaps was not very alarming, even if they observed it.

Rosa danced several times with him, and told him he danced like an angel. He informed her that was because, for once, he was dancing with an angel. She laughed, and blushed. He flattered deliciously, and it cost him little; for he fell in love with her that night, deeper than he had ever been in his whole life of intrigue. He asked leave to call on her: she looked a little shy at that, and did not respond. He instantly withdrew his proposal, with an apology and a sigh that raised her pity. However she was not a forward girl, even when excited by dancing, and charmed with her partner; so she left him to find his own way out of that difficulty.

He was not long about it. At the end of the next waltz he asked her if he might venture to solicit an introduction to her father.

'Oh! certainly,' said she. 'What a selfish girl I am; this is terribly dull for him.'

The introduction being made, and Rosa being engaged for the next three dances, Mr. Falcon sat by Mr. Lusignan and entertained him. For this little piece of apparent self-denial he was paid in various coin: Lusignan found out he was the son of an old acquaintance, and so the door of Kent Villa opened to him; meantime, Rosa Lusignan never passed him, even in the arms of a cavalry officer, without bestowing a glance of approval and gratitude on him. 'What a good-hearted young man,' thought she. 'How kind of him to amuse papa; and now I can stay so much longer.'

Falcon followed up the dance by a call, and was infinitely agreeable: followed up the call by another, and admired Rosa with so little disguise that Mr. Lusignan said to her, 'I think you have made a conquest. His father had considerable estates in Essex. I presume he inherits them.'

'Oh, never mind his estates,' said Rosa, 'he dances like an angel, and gossips charmingly, and is so nice.'

Christopher Staines pined for this girl in silence: his fine frame got thinner, his pale cheek paler, as she got rosier and rosier; and how? why by following the very advice she had snubbed him for giving her. At last, he heard she had been the belle of a ball, and that she had been seen walking miles from home, and blooming as a Hebe. Then his deep anxiety ceased, his pride stung him furiously; he began to think of his own value and to struggle with all his might against his deep love. Sometimes he would even inveigh against her, and call her a fickle, ungrateful girl, capable of no strong passion, but vanity. Many a hard term he applied to her in his sorrowful solitude; but not a word when he had a hearer. He found it hard to rest: he kept dashing up to London and back. He plunged furiously into study. He groaned and sighed, and fought the hard and bitter fight that is too often the lot of the deep that love the shallow. Strong, but single-hearted, no other lady could comfort him. He turned from their female company; and shunned all for the fault of one.

The inward contest wore him. He began to look very thin and wan; and all for a simpleton.

Mr. Falcon prolonged his stay in the neighbourhood, and drove a handsome dog-cart over twice a week to visit Mr. Lusignan.

He used to call on that gentleman at four o'clock, for at that hour Mr. Lusignan was always out, and his daughter always at home.

She was at home at that hour because she took her long walks in the morning. While her new admirer was in bed, or dressing, or breakfasting, she was springing along the road with all the elasticity of youth, and health, and native vigour, braced by daily exercise.

Twenty-one of these walks did she take, with no other result than health and appetite; but the twenty-second was more fertile; extremely fertile. Starting later than usual, she passed through Gravesend while Reginald Falcon was smoking at his front window. He saw her, and instantly doffed his dressing-gown, and donned his coat, to follow her. He was madly in love with her, and, being a man who had learned to shoot pigeons, and opportunities, flying, he instantly resolved to join her in her walk, get her clear of the town, by the sea-beach, where beauty melts, and propose to her.

Yes, marriage had not been hitherto his habit; but this girl was peerless: he was pledged by honour and gratitude to Phoebe Dale; but hang all that now. 'No man should marry one woman when he loves another, it is dishonourable.' He got into the street and followed her as fast as he could without running.

It was not so easy to catch her. Ladies are not built for running; but a fine, tall, symmetrical girl who has practised walking fast, can cover the ground wonderfully in walking—if she chooses. It was a sight to see how Rosa Lusignan squared her shoulders and stepped out from the loins, like a Canadian girl skating, while her elastic foot slapped the pavement as she spanked along.

She had nearly cleared the town before Falcon came up with her.

He was hardly ten yards from her when an unexpected incident occurred; she whisked round the corner of Bird Street, and ran plump against Christopher Staines; in fact, she darted into his arms, and her face almost touched the breast she had wounded so deeply.

(To be continued.)



THE QUEENS OF FRENCH SOCIETY IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

TO participate more or less fully in those rights and privileges which prescriptively belong to men, and to join more or less actively in those pursuits which are popularly assigned to the male sex, have generally held a favoured, though not until the present age a very obtrusive, position in the ambition of women. A crowd of what were erewhile mere aspirations have of late years developed into definitive and persistent claims. Nor have there been wanting men of great ability and influence who have urged such claims in their (perhaps) amplest significance.

That an intrinsic co-equality is likely to subsist between masculine and feminine influence in the evolvment, if not in the consummation, of important national events, is exemplified in many of the most effectively actuating causes which led to the first French Revolution. That giant event of modern times was fostered into powerful and successful activity as much by the indirect nourishment which it received from the *élite* of Frenchwomen as by the direct impulse which it derived from the weak policy of the Government, from the reckless spirit which enthralled the aristocracy, or from the *soi-disant* philosophers. The conciliatory tact displayed by the female leaders of French society powerfully contributed to unite in formidable array the jealous influences which, but for such aid, would have struggled impotently in scattered attempts against the vast inert mass of the ancient régime.

The first conspicuous effort to check the grossness which the language and literature of France

had widely contracted, especially during the sixteenth century, was made towards the close of the reign of Henry IV.; though, it need hardly be said, the king and his immediate courtiers were no very stanch promoters of such an attack upon the liberty of speech. The origination, and for many years prosecution, of so salutary a reform are due to a few *littérateurs*, and patrons of literature, who met at the Hôtel de Rambouillet. It would be difficult to picture the consternation which would have seized that illustrious company if it had known that, with the germs of an association instituted chiefly for the amelioration of the French language, it was sowing the seeds of an organizing power which, in no very remote future, would contribute largely to undermine the political and social institutions of France! It is little less surprising, at least to us, that the parent society and all its most celebrated and influential offspring were presided over by women—Queens of Society, who not only reigned but governed. For nearly half a century the Marquise de Rambouillet, admirably aided during her declining years by her daughter, Julie d'Angennes, held sway at the Hôtel de Rambouillet, 'a tribunal,' says Saint-Simon, 'which it was necessary to conciliate, and whose decisions had great weight.'

Among the diversified host of societies which succeeded the Hôtel de Rambouillet, and asserted pretensions of being modelled in conformity to it, none ever equalled it in the exquisite harmony and elevation of its character, or in the art of combining simplicity with the highest refinement. There

were, however, numerous pleasing traditions associated with its name, which were successfully imitated by assemblies such, for instance, as those subjected to the guidance of Madame de La Fayette, Madame de Caylus, and Madame de Luxembourg; thus transmitting many bright reflections from the society in the Rue Saint-Thomas du Louvre even into the latter half of the eighteenth century.

From the middle of the seventeenth century to her death in 1678, Madame de Sablé continued, though on a very diminished scale, the work of reformation which had been initiated by the brilliant society of the Hôtel de Rambouillet. Of that society she had been a very notable member, and she is also generally regarded as one of the most pleasing representatives of those who were termed *Précieuses*, a term which, when applied to her, or to her estimable associates at the Hôtel de Rambouillet, by no means implied, as many suppose, either ridicule or contempt. It was when refinement, especially in language, was carried to excess in certain *salons*, or, as they were designated, *bureaux d'esprit*,—the *salon*, for example, of Mademoiselle de Scudéry,—that the epithet was used in a deprecatory and sarcastic sense. Such were the abodes of fastidious pedantry and affectation which were ridiculed by the Abbé de Pure in the '*Précieuse, ou la Mystère de la Ruelle*,' written in 1656; whilst in the '*Précieuses Ridicules*,' published three years later, disparaging allusions to the Hôtel de Rambouillet are expressly repudiated by Molière, who, in his preface to the work, exhorts 'the true *Précieuses* not to feel hurt at the Comedy, since its satire is directed solely against those who imitate them badly.'

Far inferior to Madame de Sablé in all those solid qualities which

form the basis of an estimable and a truly lovable woman's character, hardly, indeed, retaining the shadow of such qualities, Ninon de L'Enclos far surpassed her in the extent and permanency of her influence. With shameless yet captivating temerity, she gave a perverted direction to that salutary change in the tone and tendencies of French society and literature which had originated at the Hôtel de Rambouillet. The peculiar fascination which she imparted to the association of intellectual eminence with cynical immorality, conspired, with the religious, moral, and even political hypocrisy which Louis XIV. and Madame de Maintenon were sedulously sowing amid the more prominent ranks of French society, to decide the licentious course which the nation determinedly entered upon from the commencement of the eighteenth century. In justice to Ninon de L'Enclos, however, it should be admitted that the prominent influence which she so long maintained was mainly referable to her intellectual ascendancy, whatever may have been the impulse it derived from her personal charms. The *salon* of Ninon de L'Enclos is the first, if not the most conspicuous, in a long series of theologico-literary assemblies, where, to the presence, more or less pronounced, of that spirit of refined conversation which had habitually dominated at the Hôtel de Rambouillet, there was associated a freedom of expression touching the delicate topics of religion, and gradually of politics, which had never been tolerated in the parent society. But then it should be remembered that we have entered upon the eighteenth century, an epoch to which no one could introduce us more consistently than Ninon de L'Enclos.

First in that celebrated series

the *salon* of Madame de Lambert restored much which had distinguished the Hôtel de Rambouillet, and is noteworthy for the decided footing which it gave to feminine influence in many regions of social power to which that influence had hitherto obtained no direct access. 'It is certain,' says D'Argenson, 'that the influence of Madame de Lambert has decided the election of half the members who at present belong to the Academy.' Its antagonism to authority was not, however, of a very sturdy nature; nor was a rebellious spirit more prevalent in the *salon* of Madame de Tencin; but as both derived their chief mental inspiration from La Motte and Fontenelle, this is not to be wondered at.

In political intrigue, through all its baser courses, Madame de Tencin was most able and indefatigable. Her moral character acquired an equally degraded distinction. Love and hatred were mere handmaidens to her ambition, or, more justly, to that of her brother, Cardinal de Tencin. The mistress of Dubois and of Bolingbroke was notorious for possessing a plasticity of spirit which no dissimilarity or perverseness could render unaccommodating. Facility was the key to her influence. It unlocked difficulties and disclosed secrets impenetrable to other manipulation. Her favourite maxim fairly represents the spirit which possessed her: 'Men of notable ability,' she was wont to observe, 'repeatedly err from an obstinate belief that the world is not so great a fool as it really is.' Her experience, no doubt, amply justified her cynicism. Towards the close of her reign she had observed the assiduous attendance of Madame Geoffrin at her assemblies. It needed little effort on her part to divine the reason: 'Madame Geoffrin comes here,' she remarked, 'to see what she can

gather from my inventory.' There was much truth in the surmise; and admirable were the services to which Madame Geoffrin applied her well-selected store of gleanings.

We are now with hurried steps approaching the middle of the century. Women possessed considerable control over the intellectual world. True, they could claim no intellectual production which mingled noticeably with the on-pressing crowd of novel ideas; but the aid they afforded in removing impediments to the spread of such ideas,—in smoothing the way, by an infinite variety of judicious blandishments, for the advent of the Revolution,—fairly rivals the more conspicuous achievements of the men whom they governed. The *salons* were the principal centres of attraction for all who sought to defend the old institutions of the country, or, more congenially, for those who sought to reform or to destroy them.

Madame Geoffrin contributed, more perhaps than any other woman, to the carrying out of that extraordinary work the *Encyclopédie*. Not only were its leading projectors and contributors her guests, but it is even reported that many of those engaged upon it were her pensioners: yet she can hardly be said to have belonged to the party of the Encyclopedists. Her opinions upon all the chief topics of the day were not only moderate, but at times sank to so timid a level as to contrast inconsistently with the conspicuous position she held amongst the foremost party of innovation. Nor could she have chosen a more effective implement to undermine the old *régime* than the moderation she handled so naturally: for, whilst it disarmed suspicion, it mingled the infinite gradations of opposition to Church and State in amicable

and formidable association. In this rapidly multiplying opposition, her influence and guiding power were supreme. 'Let us see,' said Helvétius to his friends, just after the publication of his work 'De l'Esprit,' 'let us see how Madame Geoffrin will receive me: it is only when I have consulted that thermometer of opinion that I shall be enabled to form some determinate estimate of the success of my work.' In truth, Madame Geoffrin was, to all intents and purposes, a veritable 'Minister of Society,' and assuredly no woman, with the exception perhaps of Madame de Pompadour, contributed more than she unwittingly did towards increasing and strengthening the forces opposed to the old monarchy. Among her guests might be seen, on one day in the week, Vanloo, Vernet, Boucher, La Tour, and many distinguished amateurs: on another, she entertained D'Alembert, Marmontel, Marivaux, Morellet, Helvétius, Grimm, D'Holbach. Her abode was incontestably the most conspicuous and cherished resort of 'the genius of France, its pride, its smile, its grace, and its enlightenment.'

Madame Geoffrin was endowed, moreover, with an attractive quality which tended, often in a most direct manner, to reach the heart and influence the mind of her numerous acquaintance. To a diffuse and somewhat prodigal generosity,—a *humeur dominante*,—for which she had a conspicuous reputation, may be attributed a very considerable share of her popularity.

But the mind of the age was advancing too impetuously to be held in check by any influence short of positive coercion. How often must Madame Geoffrin, towards the close of her reign, have been admonished, by the ever-

increasing restlessness of those around her, that the conciliatory sway which she had so long held was not only slipping away from her, but passing out of date altogether? Even Marmontel, who cannot be classed among the most 'advanced liberals' of the time, began to chafe at the restraint imposed upon him. 'With her mild "Voilà qui est bien,"' he says, 'Madame Geoffrin persists in keeping us in leading-strings: I prefer dining where one is more at one's ease.' After such an opinion, we can hardly be surprised at the following fanciful exaggeration which may be found in the correspondence of Grimm, one of the chief abettors of change.

'Madame Geoffrin gives notice that all the interdictions and restrictive laws which have heretofore prevailed in her *salon* are still to be considered in force: that no one will be allowed to speak of Home Politics, or of Foreign Politics; of what takes place at Court, or of what takes place in the City; of the affairs of the North, or of the affairs of the South; of the affairs of the East, or of the affairs of the West; of Peace or of War; of Religion, or of Government; of Theology or of Metaphysics; in short, of any subject whatsoever.' In refinement of taste and manners, moreover, she affected to clothe her *salon* too much after the fashion of the Hôtel de Rambouillet, a solecism which found little beyond constrained sympathy among her contemporaries. She would not, for example, tolerate Piron amongst her guests; Piron, whom she generously assisted, and whose political and religious views could cause her no alarm; Piron, the most brilliant conversationist and epigrammatist of the century! Listen to the poet himself in the following sonnet which he sent to Madame Geoffrin in 1771:—

‘ Vous êtes de beau maintien,
Grande en toutes manières,
La reine des gens de bien,
Tenant toujours cour plénière.
Eloigné de vos États,
A moi vous ne songez guère ;
L’absent n’intéresse pas :

Helas !

Vous n’m’aimez pas.

* * * *

Et pourtant rien n’est si vrai
Quoiqu’aveugle comme Homère
Je suis encore aussi gai
Que Rabelais et Molière ;
J’ai comme eux de jolis rats ;
Mais sage et même un peu fière,
Tout ça ne vous plaira pas :

Helas !

Vous n’m’aimez pas.

Gens d’esprit, gens délicats,
Gens aiment la bonne chère,
Seigneurs, princes, potentats,
Tout vous aime et vous révère.
Tapi dans mon galetas,
Enterré dans la poussière,
De moi peut-on faire cas ?

Helas !

Vous n’m’aimez pas.’

Condemning, by an example of the most refined decorum, the gross moral laxity, and the extravagant mental speculations, of the time, Madame Geoffrin never failed in that admirable spirit of moderation which formed the chief ingredient in nearly every element of her character, and which, even in her last illness, shone with its accustomed mild radiance. To some remonstrance which reached her on her death bed in 1777 against the repulsive austerity of her daughter towards several of the philosophers, she replied, with a smile—‘ My daughter is emulous of Godefroi de Bouillon, she is anxious to defend my tomb against the Infidels.’

There was a dissimilarity, verging upon absolute contrast, between the chief phases of character presented by Madame Geoffrin, and those which were most prominent in Madame du Deffand. Moderation, no doubt, figured conspicuously in both characters ; but

in each it derived its existence from very different sources. In the one it issued, in a very considerable degree, from judgment ; in the other it proceeded wholly from indifference : Madame Geoffrin was urged to advocate and impose conciliation not merely by the natural placidity of her temperament, but, in some measure, no doubt, by a sincere desire to promote, through general toleration of opinion, the cause of progress : Madame du Deffand deprecated the collision of opinion because she feared to cloud the pleasant front of conviviality, or to ruffle the equanimity of aristocratic intercourse. In the latter we perceive hardly a grain of that admirable common-sense which so distinguished the former ; but then this solid deficiency was charmingly veiled by the pleasing sallies and sparkling epigrams which flowed from a brilliant and copious imagination. In place of the high moral character which adorned the former, we perceive in the latter a cynical, unimpassioned, and, at an early period of her life, wayward disregard for every stain, however conspicuous, which darkened her reputation. One of the chief causes which contributed to popularize and endow with vast influence the *salon* of Madame Geoffrin was its comprehensive yet prudently select character : the prince and the needy *littérateur* met there in companionship so pleasing that rarely were the susceptibilities of either subjected to the slightest wound. But this was a feat in which Madame Geoffrin had the rare good fortune marvellously to excel other women. Madame du Deffand entertained the same princely and aristocratic class as her great rival ; but beyond that class her choice was far more exclusive without being more select.

She is called by M. Villemain *la femme-Voltaire*, though we are at a loss to discover any justification for the *sobriquet* except her unqualified and diseased scepticism, which wanted with careless ease, over the vast fields of religion and politics, and assailed with but slight compunction every disinterested affection of the human heart.

Endowed with a peculiarly fascinating combination of good and bad qualities, a combination exquisitely adapted, in the morbid and sorely-disaffected temper of the times, to strengthen the rapidly-growing hostility to established forms and institutions, Madame du Deffand succeeded in rendering her salon particularly agreeable and influential. Her person and manners were singularly attractive: she had great intellectual acuteness: her wit was lively and always under control; she was profusely gifted with conversational aptitudes and resources. Take the following *bon mot*, reported on good authority, as a sample:—‘Conçoit-on, madame,’ observed the Cardinal de Polignac to the Duchesse du Maine, ‘conçoit-on que saint Denis portât son chef dans ses mains pendant deux lieues—deux lieues!’ ‘Oh! monseigneur, il n’y a que le premier pas qui coûte!’ was the prompt exclamation of Madame du Deffand. With all these brilliant qualities, however, Madame du Deffand was guilty of mixing a considerable alloy of self-conceit; and she was too prone, moreover, according to the testimony even of her most intimate friend, the President Hénault, to assume an unduly high estimate of the merits of her favoured guests. The spirit of scepticism which so overshadowed her mind could not obscure the implicit belief she held that

‘Nul n’aura d’esprit hors nous et nos amis.’

Though afflicted with blindness during the latter part of her life, Madame du Deffand continued to exercise with undiminished effect the subtle charm with which she had ever fascinated the world. That she was often designated *l’aveugle clairvoyante* proves that her terrible calamity had not despoiled her, to any noticeable degree, of that sharpness of mental vision for which she had always been distinguished. On the other hand, it cannot be said that any of the censurable traits in her character presented a less marked or inveterate appearance.

When her early reckless amours, based rather upon vanity than upon affection, began to show symptoms of waning novelty, she found it convenient to subside into a sentimental regard for the President Hénault, a man who, in all the higher qualities of the heart and the intellect, was far her superior, but whose vanity was not proof against the blandishments of one who wielded so imposing an influence in society. How perfectly consistent, on the other hand, was the fantastic love which, in her old age, she lavished upon Horace Walpole. It would be difficult to parallel the striking similarity and conformity which subsisted between the chief moral and intellectual characteristics of those worthy lovers. Madame du Deffand and Horace Walpole were indeed admirably paired. Selfish to the heart’s core, yet parading the most lavish and delicate sympathy for all and every one. Fanatically aristocratical, yet continually mouthing democratic platitudes, and countenancing, often ostentatiously, the impugnors of authority, and the scoffers at opinions which the world for the most part had come honestly and

conscientiously to hold in reverence. They were, in a word, fascinating and fashionable types of moral and political hypocrisy. The following epigram by Rulhière pillories one of Madame du Deffand's most conspicuous vices, a vice which probably endeared her to Walpole, who was himself a distinguished connoisseur in the art of delicate calumny:—

'Elle y voyait dans son enfance,
C'était alors la médisance.
Elle a perdu son œil et gardé son génie,
C'est aujourd'hui la calomnie.'

The woman capable of asserting her independence, of preserving her intellectual integrity, and of exhibiting a placid sweetness of disposition, who had been subjected during a long course of years to the deteriorating influence and domination of Madame du Deffand must assuredly have possessed considerable mental and moral strength. It has been amply conceded, indeed, that Mademoiselle de Lespinasse was endowed with a rarely ruffled amiability of temper, and that on every subject which did not immediately implicate her heart she possessed unusual strength of mind. She possessed neither the influential position of Madame de Tencin, the riches of Madame Geoffrin, nor the beauty or aristocratic status of Madame du Deffand; yet, if not in extent, at least in degree, of influence, she surpassed them all. It was the frequent abnegation of self,—in spite of a too vivid imagination, and an excess of sentiment which often degenerated into passion,—the charming tact of yielding gracefully in a diversified crowd of jealous opinions, the absolute impartiality afforded to every shade and expression of speculative thought, the ever sunny elevation from which she contemplated and directed the wordy

war raging around her, and, pre-eminently, that indefinable suavity of manner and language which nipped irritation in the bud,—these were the attributes and modes that made her a power in society. And it should not be forgotten that she had to rule strong men, men such as Condillac and Turgot. Her most striking visible influence was, through D'Alembert, chiefly over the Academy, and occasioned considerable controversy and heart-burning; but the momentous action of her power was, like that which had distinguished so many other female potentates and leaders of society during the century, to associate, amalgamate, and converge towards a single aim, all the passionate, political, and social impulses, all the crude undigested schemes, which were fermenting in the brain and heart of the French nation. To them, perhaps, in the highest degree, must be ascribed the disastrous fate of the old *régime*.

That the Queens of French Society influenced, more or less potently, the political opinions and events of the entire eighteenth century, may, to some extent, be directly inferred from the peculiar position which they held during the first decade of the Revolution. The salons of Madame Roland, Madame Necker, Madame de Staël, Madame Suard, and others, were conspicuously political—that of Madame Roland being little more than a supplement of the Legislative Assembly.

So exceptionally engrossing were political acts and questions towards the close of the century, that the potentates of the salons were very generally impelled with hasty precipitancy to become mere political partisan leaders. The exceptions were neither numerous nor notable. Among those whose

classification may be considered somewhat doubtful, Madame de Staël occupies a very distinguished place. Her natural inclination, and the violent political tendencies of the time, bore her strongly in a political direction: she was, moreover, a politician both by descent and education. But the distinction she acquired in literature disposed her towards a divided allegiance. Her *salon* may be regarded, partly in consequence of the dualistic spirit which governed it, as a conspicuous connecting link between the past, with its visionary political schemes, and her own time, which was overwhelmed with stern political realities. It may also be noted as fairly representing the transition phase between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

'Madame de Staël est de moyenne taille, assez bien faite, maigre, sèche et désagréable. Son caractère et son esprit sont comme sa figure.' In this portrait of herself, Madame de Staël has, no doubt, slightly overacted the part of a modest self-lincher; but we can at least catch a glimpse of her true individuality through the veil of depreciation which she affects. The power she exercised was chiefly political, and may be measured by the degree of petty persecution it brought upon herself, and the fatuous alarm it occasioned in the Conqueror of Europe. But this political prominence in her influence is mainly referable, as we have already remarked, to the humour of the times; for Madame de Staël was not only desirous of maintaining, in conformity with the most admired precedents, a becoming and consistent admixture of the literary element in the conversation of those who frequented her *salon*, but she often betrayed certain proclivities of spirit which constrains us to associate her,

though not very intimately, with the *Précieuses Ridicules*. This excessive tendency to precision in the character of her discourse is unfeelingly thrust upon our notice by Bayle-Stendhal, who observes that, 'Madame de Staël hastened her death by over-taxing her strength in the labour she expended in conversation.'

With this brief notice of Madame de Staël, our work—the mere skeleton of a sketch—should terminate. If we allow the pen to pass the prescribed limit, it is merely to close the dynasty of female sovereigns that had, with general acclamation, ruled French society during the eighteenth century. Madame Récamier may claim the honour, though with but slight *éclat*, of being the last of that illustrious series. Like Madame de Lambert, whose *salon* had flourished during the infancy of the eighteenth century, Madame Récamier, who witnessed the birth of the succeeding age, was averse to the discussion of all questions that tended to stir the passions, or that were of immediate public interest. She rather ostentatiously eschewed the slightest appearance of possessing political opinions: in the productions and tendencies of literature she never even affected to possess a shadow of interest, and certainly no woman enjoying equal celebrity ever exercised less direct influence over social opinion; yet in the world's estimation she is amply justified in taking her position among the potentates of society. With perfect freedom from passion in all its compromising and intense forms; with few preferences that were other than charmingly languid; with a prudence which was mathematically correct; with a degree of half-concealed firmness of disposition rarely to be found in her sex; with little feeling, and that

little perfectly under control, Madame Récamier possessed physical beauty of the highest order, and of a nature universally captivating. Armed with such formidable weapons, she was both invulnerable and irresistible. Her personal influence, indeed, seems to have had no bounds but those prescribed by her will. She could accommodate her amiability to suit any character. Never for a moment endangering her own self-possession, or losing sight of the special object sought to be obtained, she could play upon human affections and feelings with the most refined and exquisite delicacy: she glided into the citadel of the heart with a step so stealthy that all effective resistance was paralyzed. To degrade her, however, to the level of a mere coquette would be unseemly and unjust. There may have been occasionally a little affectation of affection, but there was surely no capriciousness or careless heartlessness, in her intercourse with those upon whom she deigned to smile; for her heart, which had little capacity, and was almost void, had been schooled by her understanding in every charitable device. She meted to every one with minute exactitude the amount of consideration, sympathy, or affection which propriety suggested, instinctively conscious of the degree of fascination to which the mind or heart of any individual was capable of being subjected without endangering its equilibrium. Her love—that is to say, the quality or sentiment which occupied the place of love in her heart—was so impartial, so widely diffused, so singularly free from all the weaknesses of human passion, that it often seemed to verge upon the preternatural, or, as might less delicately be insinuated, the un-

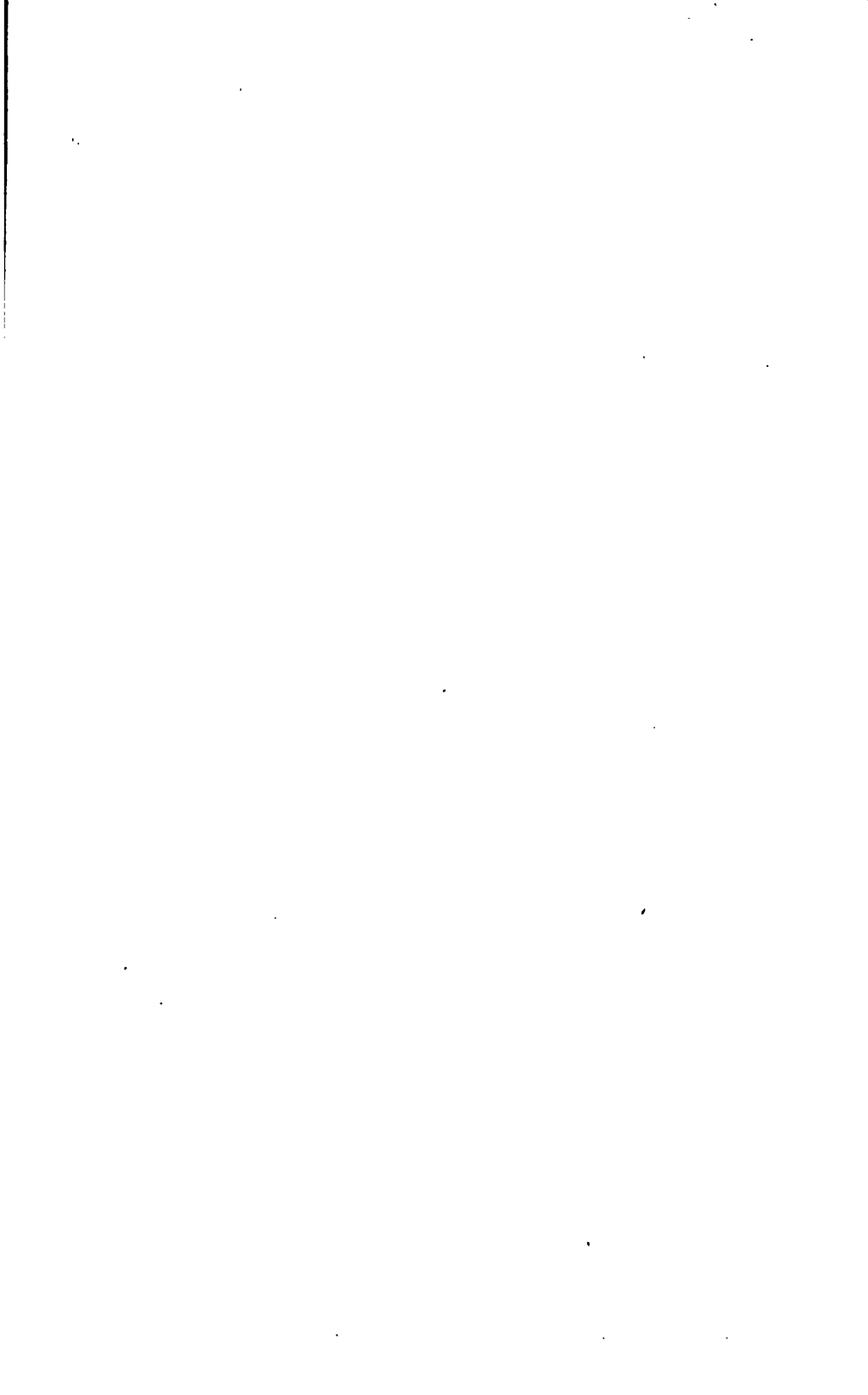
natural. No length of time, no disparity in social position, no divergency of opinion, could influence Madame Récamier in her personal preferences, or induce her to swerve to the right or the left of the course she had determined to pursue. Under the Directory, under the Empire, under the Restoration, under the July Monarchy, she was the same: she endeared herself, with decorously modulated sympathy, as much to the modest printer, M. Ballanche, as to Prince Augustus of Prussia, to Benjamin Constant as to Matthieu de Montmorency, to the Duchesse de Chevreuse as to Queen Hortense. By such copious affection, such perfect impartiality, Madame Récamier achieved for her salon a latitude of comprehension, if not of popularity, unsurpassed by any of its predecessors under the old monarchy. ‘*Vraie reine de salon, dans sa petite chambre de l’Abbaye-aux-Bois comme dans son hôtel de la Chaussée-d’Antin, reine charmante, mais bien plus reine que femme.*’

To Madame Récamier there succeeded no leader of society who acquired a power sufficiently imposing to justify the assumption of an immediate affinity with the queenly race of the preceding age. The *salon*, measured by the high and influential position it attained towards the middle of the eighteenth century, suffered shipwreck with the old *régime*: nor, judging from the existing scope of political experience, and the prevalent tendencies of general civilization, is there the slightest probability that any future conjuncture of events will afford it an opportunity of reassuming the plenitude of its ancient power: its queens may reign over the fashionable world, but never more will they govern society.



Drawn by R. Newcombe.]

A SEA BREEZE.



SKETCHES FROM PARIS.

II.—'Wanted Three Millions.'

'**A**U revoir, à demain!' said Berthe, kissing a fair-haired young girl, and conducting her to the door.

'What a sweet face! Whose is it?' inquired Madame de Beaucoeur.

'Hélène de Karodel's. Her character is sweeter still than her face,' said Berthe. 'I have fallen quite in love with her.' And she related the story of their meeting at the réunion de Monceau, and the acquaintance which had followed.

'It is a fine old Breton name, and used to be a wealthy one. How comes she to be earning her bread, poor child?'

'The old story,' said Berthe; 'General de Karodel mismanaged his property, took to speculating, by way of mending matters, and, of course, lost everything. Then he died, leaving a widow and three children to do the best they could with his debts and his pension—some forty pounds a year. Hélène is the eldest, and what she earns pays for the education of the second sister.'

'But the rest of the family are well off. Why don't they do something for them?'

'Rich relations are not given much, as a rule, to helping poor ones,' replied Berthe. 'Besides, these de Karodels are as proud as Lucifer; and benefits are pills that a proud spirit finds it difficult to swallow; it takes a good deal of love to gild them.'

'Very true.' And dismissing Hélène de Karodel with a sigh, Madame de Beaucoeur resumed: 'Chère amie, I am come to ask you to do me a service.'

Her presence, indeed, at so early an hour on Berthe's day suggested

at once something more important than an ordinary visit.

Amongst the many institutions of modern Paris life a day is one which deserves to be noticed. Everybody has a day. Women in society have a day, from necessity, for the convenience of themselves and their visitors, whose name is legion. Women not in society have a day because they like to think it a necessity. The former speak of their day as '*mon jour*,' and, as a rule, hate it because it ties them down to stay at home one day in the week. The latter speak of it as '*mon jour de réception*,' and glory in it. For the former it is a mere episode, an occasion amongst many for gossip, mostly of the *Grandhomme* and *Folibel* kind, but now and then of a more serious character, sometimes of conversation on such grave topics as politics, science, and even theology. For the latter it is a grand opportunity for dress, and dulness, and weary expectation. Madame, attired in state, sits on a sofa, like Patience on a monument, smiling, not at grief but at hope—hope of the visitors who come like angels, few and far between. Woe be unto the false or foolish friend, who, under pretext of business, or kind inquiries, or lack of time, should pass by this day of days, and call on some common, insignificant day, when neither madame nor the *salon* nor the *valet de chambre* are in toilet to receive him!

But it is not into one of these dreary Saharas that we have strayed. Berthe's day is as busy as a fair. So great is the concourse of visitors, that, although her reception begins officially at three, the room begins to fill long be-

fore that time, her friends protesting that the crowd is so great, there is no getting to say a word to her unless they break through the *consigne*, and come early.

'A service!' she repeated, eagerly extending her hand to Madame de Beaucœur. 'I hope that is not too good to be true.'

'Toujours charmante!' said Madame de Beaucœur, pressing the fair little hand; 'but the service I am going to ask does not directly concern myself. You know Madame de Chassedot?'

'Slightly. I meet her par ci, par là; we bow, but we don't speak.'

'To-day she has requested me to speak for her. Do you know her son at all?'

'A fair youth, tall and rather good-looking?'

'Precisely.'

'I have seen him often, and I think I danced with him at the Marine the other night,' said Berthe, reflectively.

'Then you know him at his best. He dances admirably; but I believe that is the only thing he does well,' was Madame de Beaucœur's comment.

'*Il est très-bête?*' observed Berthe.

'*Pas très-bête, bête simplement.*

But this is a detail. He is, as you know, good-looking, bien né, and very rich. He is heir to his uncle, and will be one day, therefore, at the head of two of the finest châteaux in France, each representing two millions of money. The paternal millions have grown smaller since the old gentleman's death; but the uncle's will replenish them by-and-by; he is in very bad health, and seventy-six years of age; so his nephew cannot have very long to wait now, and he is safe to have a splendid fortune by the time he settles down.'

'En attendant—?' said Berthe, pretending not to see the drift of these preliminaries,

'En attendant, his mother is very anxious to marry him.'

'To whom?'

'Ah, that's just it! She spoke confidentially to me, and begged I would look out a belle-fille for her. I promised I would do my best. Like all belles-mères, she wants impossibilities—perfection, in fact. Sixteen quarterings en règle, that is, of course, understood, equal fortune, and so on. But, though Edgar's fortune will be nominally four millions, as he has compromised one million already, she would count it as *non venu*, and only exact three millions with his wife. You see,' continued Madame de Beaucœur, she is willing to do things en grand seigneur.'

'How did he compromise the odd million?' inquired Berthe, evasively.

'Mon Dieu!' On n'y regarde pas de si près!' said Madame de Beaucœur, smiling at the *naïveté* of the question.

'Après?' said Berthe.

'The girl must be pretty and well brought up. I must tell you, ma chère,' continued the negotiatrice, with a sort of diffidence, as if conscious that she was about to state some ludicrous or damaging fact—'I must tell you that Madame de Chassedot donne dans la haute dévotion, and she would like to find a belle-fille qui y donnerait aussi. Otherwise she is the best of women, good-natured and intelligent, and disposed to do all in her power to make her son's wife happy.'

'And the son himself, does he pledge himself towards the same end?'

'Ah! there is the difficulty! Unfortunately he won't hear of being married at all. The moment his mother mentions the subject, he turns it off with a joke, or, if she insists, he flies into a tantrum, rushes out of the house,

and she doesn't see him again for a week. You can fancy how this complicates the matter for her, poor woman.'

'It certainly is a complication,' observed Berthe.

'And it makes it the more incumbent on us to help her,' continued the envoy. 'I promised that I would enlist your good offices in her behalf, and that she might count upon them. Did I promise too much?'

'If you promised that I would marry her son for her, *nolens volens*, you certainly did,' replied Berthe, laughing ironically.

'Oh I did not go that length,' protested Madame de Beaucœur, who began to feel snubbed, but laughed very heartily to hide her pique; 'I only said you were more likely than any other woman in Paris to know the girl who united all she was looking for; and that if you did know her, you would give Madame de Chassedot an opportunity of meeting her.'

'And how about Monsieur de Chassedot meeting her?' inquired Berthe, perversely. 'After all, I suppose, they must look each other in the face once before they swear eternal love and duty *par devant* Monsieur le Maire; and if this disobliging young man flies out of the room at the bare mention of a wife—? Chère Madame, with all due respect for your high diplomatic abilities, believe me, this enterprise is beyond them.'

'It is not beyond his mother's,' said Madame de Beaucœur. 'Trust me, if you find the right person, you may be quite satisfied Madame de Chassedot will manage the rest.'

Berthe was going to reply, when the door opened, and the Princess de M—— was announced.

As soon as the usual greetings were exchanged, the three ladies entered on what formed the *chitchat* of the day, viz., the cholera,

the exhibition of paintings, and a new comedy called '*La Beauté du Diable*,' that was setting all Paris by the ears. But they were not left long alone; the rooms filled rapidly; the new-comers, however, instead of checking the conversation, enlivened it, every fresh arrival falling in with the current, and giving it additional animation. The cholera was still on the *tapis* when an old senator joined the circle.

'The Empress does not believe it to be contagious,' he said, 'and holds it of primary importance that the popular prejudice on this point should be broken down both by theory and practice. This was the chief motive of her visit to Amiens. I have just been to the Tuileries, and heard all about it.'

'*Racontez, monsieur, racontez!*' exclaimed Berthe, recognizing his white hairs by making room for him on the sofa beside her.

'*Vous me comblez, madame!*' said the old courtier, bending to his knees before assuming the place of honour. 'I should, at least, have run the gauntlet with the plague myself to deserve to be so favoured. You are aware,' he continued, in a more serious tone, 'that it was raging furiously at Amiens. The townspeople were so panic-stricken that the victims were deserted the moment they were seized. Every house was closed; no one walked abroad for fear of rubbing against some infected thing or person; and, except the Sisters of Charity going in and out of the condemned houses and hospitals, there was hardly a soul to be seen in the streets. In fact, it threatened to be a second edition of the plague of Milan. The Empress, hearing all this, suddenly announced her intention of visiting the city. The Emperor strongly opposed the project, and her ladies seconded him. The Empress, how-

ever, held her own against them all, like a Spaniard and a woman, said she would have nobody run any risk on her account, and declared herself determined to go alone; whereupon two of her ladies piquées d'honneur volunteered to go with her. They started by the first train next day, and returned the same evening, no one the worse for the journey.'

'I dare say,' remarked a young *cruvé*, a Legitimist *enragé*, who always spoke of the Emperor as *ce gaillard-là*, and who would have as soon dined with his *conciergerie* as at the Tuileries; 'they made a tour in a close carriage round the town, and took precious care to keep clear of the dangerous quarters.'

'I have the word of her Majesty to the contrary, monsieur,' affirmed the senator. 'She visited the wards, inquired minutely into their organization, and spoke to several of the sufferers. The equerry who accompanied her told me that she actually held the hand of one poor fellow who was dying, and stooped down, putting her ear close to his lips, to hear something he had to say about his little children; there were three of them; their mother had died that morning, and now they were going to be left quite destitute. The Empress sent for them on the spot, embraced them in the presence of their father, and promised to take care of them. He expired soon after, blessing her.'

'Noble cœur!' murmured Berthe, and a tear stood in her eye.

'Comédie, haute comédie!' sneered the *cruvé* du Faubourg.

'Politique plutôt,' observed a député du centre, stroking his beard; 'politique.'

'Politique de comédienne!' said a député de la gauche; 'but it is time and trouble lost; the people are no longer duped by that sort of charlatanism.'

'Say, rather, the people are tired of peace and prosperity, and want a change at any cost,' said the Princess de M——. 'You are the most unmanageable people under the sun; the wonder is how any one can be found willing to govern you.'

'That is quite true,' assented Berthe, whose politics were of no absolute colour, but leaned towards Imperialism; partly because it was the established order of things, and because the court was pleasant, and its hospitalities magnificent. 'We are an unruly nation; but whatever one thinks of the Empire, it is ungrateful and unjust not to give the Empress credit at least for good intentions in this visit to Amiens. It was an act of heroic charity and courage; and that it was a wise step as well as a bold one, is proved by the fact that the pestilence has decreased sensibly from the very day of her visit.'

'Oh, madame, de grâce!' protested in chorus the *cruvé*, and the two deputies.

'The bulletins of the last week are there to prove it,' said Berthe.

'Where were they fabricated?' demanded the député de la gauche; 'perhaps M. de Taitout could tell us?'

Monsieur de Taitout was chef de Cabinet au Ministère de l'Intérieur.

'They were issued at Amiens by the medical men attached to the hospitals, and by the Commission of Public Health, I presume,' replied the ministerial functionary with hauteur.

'Ces messieurs had a roll of red ribbon a-piece, I hope, in return for their satisfactory bulletins, no doubt?' pursued the député de la gauche, superciliously.

'You appear well informed, monsieur; we must infer that you are honoured by the confidence of

the Minister of Police?" observed M. de Taitout, provoked out of his official smoothness, and darting a glance of peculiar meaning at the deputy.

The latter bit his lip and reddened, while a suppressed titter ran through the company. This suspicion of complicity with the Police, which the established system of compression, and its attendant *espionnage*, engendered too readily, was apt to fall sometimes on the most unlikely subjects. It may have been quite erroneous in the present instance, but it was all the more galling from the fact that certain previous *on-dits* had prepared the public mind for credulity. Many people attributed the fierce antagonism of the deputy to his having been disappointed in obtaining a prefecture under the existing government.

But, be this as it may, Berthe, though she disliked, and unconsciously, perhaps, mistrusted the deputy, did not choose that he should be made uncomfortable in her *salon*. She did not like the turn the conversation was taking, and by way of diverting it without breaking off too brusquely from the line of discussion, she said, addressing an Académicien, who had just joined the circle:

'Is it not quite possible, admitting panic to be the first condition of contagion, that the presence of the Empress in the midst of the sick and dying may have had such an effect on the *moral* of the people as would sufficiently explain, on common-sense grounds, the immediate decrease of the disease? Instruct us, monsieur le philosophe!'

'Madame, I come here to learn, rather than to teach,' replied the man of science, with the gallantry of his three-score years and ten; 'but since you do me the honour to ask my opinion, I am happy to

say it has the good fortune to agree with your own. The people were convinced that to breathe the infected atmosphere was to die. The Empress, of her own free impulse, comes boldly into the midst of it, stands beside the dying and the dead, breathes long draughts of contagion, and does not die; ergo, contagion is a fallacy, and panic is straightway killed.'

'Votre ergo, monsieur, est un homme d'esprit!' said the Princess de M——, tapping the arm of her chair with her parasol; 'and now that we have killed panic, let us dismiss the plague, and talk of something else!'

'Yes,' said Berthe, 'or else talking might bring on a panic, and make us catch it. Have you been lately to the theatre, monsieur?'

'I went last night to see *La Beauté du Diable*,' replied the *philosophe*.

'Ah! and what did you think of it?'

'I think, madame—que la France est bien malade,' said the old man, impressively.

'One need not be un des quarante to find out that,' remarked the député de la gauche.

'Is it so very bad?' inquired Berthe, turning a deaf ear to this not very polite comment.

'It is so bad,' replied the Académicien, 'that if I had not seen with my own eyes, and heard with my own ears, I could not have believed it possible that the French drama and the French public could have fallen so low. I asked myself whether I was in Paris or in Sodom. From first to last, the piece is a tissue of licence and blasphemy for which I know no parallel, even approximately, in the most ribald productions of ancient or modern literature.'

'Dear me!' exclaimed Berthe,

'you quite horrify me. We had just arranged a *partie fine* to go and see it on Wednesday!'

'Take an old man's advice, madame; don't go,' said the *Académicien*, gravely.

'*Ma foi*,' said the Princess de M——, twirling her parasol, and lolling back in the luxurious *fauteuil*; 'it all depends if one is prepared to risk it. *Moi, je me risque!*'

The *philosophe* bowed to the brave lady, but made no comment.

'Why does the censorship permit such bad comedies to be played?' asked Madame de Beaucoeur; 'I thought its *raison d'être* was the protection of la morale publique?'

'La morale politique, madame,' corrected the député de la gauche, with an air of mock solemnity; 'and most conscientious it is in the discharge of its duty. An irreverent insinuation against the government suffices to bring down anathema on a comedy or a drama, from which no amount of talent can redeem it. My friend, Henri ——, has just had a *chef-d'œuvre*, the result of a whole year's toil, rejected on the plea that some passages which cannot be removed without changing the entire plot, might be construed by sensitive Imperialists into a covert hit at the dynasty.'

'The judges would serve the dynasty better by exercising a little wholesome restraint over what may prove more fatal to it in the long run than even servile flattery,' observed the *philosophe*. 'What think you, M. le Sénateur?'

The senator shrugged his shoulders.

'Que voulez-vous? One must reckon somewhere with human nature; you cannot lock it up on every side; if you don't leave a safety-valve to let off the super-

fluous steam the ship will blow up.'

'Take care the valve does not turn out to be a leak that will sink the ship!' said the *Académicien*. 'Our press and our literature are like a canker eating into the very heart of the nation, and rotting it; the people are taught to scoff at everything; to make a jest of everything, human and divine; nothing is sacred to the venal scribes who pander to the base passions of humanity, and prey upon its vices and follies. When public morality has come to that pass where one of the first writers of the day publicly vindicates the devil's claim to our respect as "*un révolutionnaire malheureux*," and when one of the last writes and prints such a sentence as "*je vous cède le bon Dieu, mais laissez-moi le diable!*" and that the cynical blasphemy calls out no stronger comment than a laugh or a shrug: when, I say, le progrès has arrived at this point, it is time the ship's hold were looked to!'

'I grant you the signs are disquieting,' assented the senator, shaking his head; and having conceded so much he took out his enamelled *tabatière*, and prepared a pinch.

'A sign to my mind much more to the purpose, is that the nation is mortellement ennuyée,' observed the député du centre, with a weighty emphasis on the adverb; 'when France ennues herself it is time to cry—gare!'

'Gare à qui?' said the Princess de M——.

'To the Government, madame. We have had this one now eighteen years — three years beyond the lease France usually gives to any government—and the people are sick of it. Paris especially is ennuyée to death of late.'

'Paris is always ennuyée, unless

she has an exhibition, or a war, or a carnival quelconque to keep her in good humour,' said Berthe; 'but Paris is not France.'

'Paris, c'est le monde, madame!' replied M. du centre, with a melodramatic accent.

'Le monde, non,' protested Madame de M——, 'le demi-monde peut-être.'

There was a laugh at this little sortie of the Princess's, and before it subsided a group of new arrivals, amongst whom were the snow-storm and her mother, broke up the controversy. Several of the company, some who had not spoken a word to Berthe, but had only made *acte de présence* in the crowd, withdrew. Madame de Beaucœur and the Princess remained.

'Quelle ravissante jeune fille!' said the former, in a *sotto voce* to the Princess, as Madame de Galliac and her daughter sat down near them. 'Who is she?'

'Mademoiselle de Galliac; she is the parti of the season; on-dit, gives her four millions.'

'Indeed!' Madame de Beaucœur, on marriageable maids intent, pricked up her ears, 'How odd I should not have met her before!'

'She has only lately arrived from Brittany. Our hostess patronizes her very zealously; I suppose she is looking out for a husband for her.'

Madame de Beaucœur said nothing; but committed the remark to her mental note-book. Why had Berthe not suggested this girl to her for Madame de Chassodot? It was the very thing she wanted. Old name—four millions—one too many, but the inequality was on the right side—beauty, and, of course, good principles. How could Berthe be so disobliging, or so thoughtless? Big with a mighty purpose, and unable to resist the *besoin d'épanchement*, Madame de Beaucœur turned to the Princess

de M——, and in the strictest confidence opened her heart to her.

But Madame de M—— was a foreigner, and did not fall in sympathetically with French views on the subject of marriage, and was moreover given to call things bluntly by their names.

'A girl with her name, and beauty, and money, will find plenty of willing purchasers,' she replied, 'and I see no conceivable reason for supposing she would let herself be forced on an unwilling one. There are husbands to be had at all prices, and she can bid for the best; the best, moreover, are already bidding for her.'

'Ah!' said Madame de Beaucœur, alarm mingling with curiosity in the interjection.

'Why, you don't think a prize like that would be twenty-four hours in the Paris market without having scores of the highest bidders fighting for it?'

'How mercenary men are! It is quite disgusting. They are greatly changed since my day,' said the Frenchwoman.

Madame de Beaucœur was on the sunny side of forty; she had been married at eighteen from school to a man she had never laid her eyes on till ten days before her marriage. Of the many and exciting interviews that had previously taken place between notaries and *belles-mères*, she had heard no particulars, and being a rather romantic young lady in those days, she had ignored their existence altogether.

'Very likely; but in this case it strikes me the woman is the mercenary party; you say the young man resents being married at all, big *dot* or little *dot*?' said Madame de M——, laughing, and speaking rather louder than was desirable in the vicinity of the marketable *dot*.

'Introduce me to Madame de Galliac,' said her companion, and striking a *coup d'état* on the spot. The request was complied with, and the two ladies were soon absorbed in each other.

'How are we going to kill the week chère Madame?' asked the Princess de M——, who had risen to go, and now pounced upon Berthe as she stood speeding a parting guest at the door; 'for Wednesday we have the *Beauté du Diable*, and a *dîner au cabaret*; Thursday there is un *petit souper*, then Tortoni after the *Palais Royal*; but the other three days, what shall we do with them?'

'I have not an idea just now: we will talk it over to-morrow night at Madame de Beauceur's; but do not count on me for Wednesday,' said Berthe; 'I have changed my mind about going.'

'What! you are going to play us false?' exclaimed the Princess, her ugly but expressive features lighting up with irresistible humour, while her eyes shot out a cold, sardonic glance into Berthe's; 'that old perruque has put you out of conceit with it? But no! It is too absurd, ma chère!'

'Absurd or not, I don't intend to go,' said Berthe, resolutely; 'I'm not as brave as you are; je ne veux pas me risquer.'

'It will get abroad that you have turned *dévoté*; de grâce, madame, ne vous donnez pas ce ridicule. Tout Paris va se moquer de vous!'

'Tout Paris may say what it likes,' answered Berthe, bridling up, while a blush of defiant pride suffused her cheek; 'I despise its gossip, and, bref, I don't mean to go.'

'Seriously?'

'Quite seriously.'

The Princess lifted her shoulders slowly till they touched her

ears, and then as slowly let them fall.

'Then there is no use in proposing to you a little distraction we had planned for Saturday, an escapade in dominos and masks to the *bal de l'opéra*?'

'Merci! Je ne veux pas me risquer!' said Berthe, smiling.

'Adieu! you will make a charming saint, but I fear I shan't love the saint as much as——'

'The sinner,' added Berthe, good-humouredly; 'oh, well, I've not donned sackcloth and ashes yet, so you must not give me up for lost quite; but don't suppose,' she continued, seeing Madame de M——'s eyes fixed on her with a puzzled expression, 'that I mean to reproach you for amusing yourself. Our positions are different; you have your husband to stand between you and evil tongues; and again, you are not amongst your own people here. Would you go on at Berlin as you do in Paris?'

'Oh!!!' The Princess threw up her parasol, caught it again, and laughed out loud. 'Mais Paris c'est un cabaret, on y fait ce qu'on veut!' she said; and with this exhaustive apology passed out.

Berthe had turned in to the second *salon*, where some of the earlier visitors had gathered to leave room for new arrivals in the first; but she was hardly seated when the door was again opened, and François announced—

'Le Marquis de Chassedot!'

He could not have startled his mistress more if he had announced the Marquis de Carrabas. Was it a trap set for Edgar by Madame de Beauceur? But no. Mademoiselle de Galliac's presence to-day was quite fortuitous, and moreover, Madame de Beauceur did not know her, so she could have laid no scheme into which the heiress's visit adjusted itself.

'You were kind enough to

permit me to pay my respects to you, Madame le Comtesse,' said the young man, walking up to Berthe, with his hat in both hands, and blushing violently, while he doubled himself in two before her: 'I hope I am not indiscreet in availing myself so precipitately of the permission.'

Berthe smiled her gracious clemency on the indiscretion; and the gentleman, backing a few steps, carried himself and his hat to a group of politicians, who were shaking hands in the window and making appointments before separating.

'Quel toupé!' muttered Berthe, laughing to herself at the cool audacity of M. de Chassedot. 'I was kind enough to permit him! Perhaps he is under a delusion, and mistook somebody else's permission for mine; or perhaps it's a ruse of his mother's to put him unawares in the way of the three millions.'

But Berthe was wrong. M. de Chassedot had really said something to her, between the links of the *chaîne des dames*, about placing himself at her feet, and, as she looked very smiling and gracious, he took the smiles for a permission. He had no view in asking it beyond the pleasure of being received in the *salon* of the fashionable beauty, where he was not likely to meet his mother. It would be a free territory, where he might flit about without being in perpetual dread of falling into some matrimonial net, such as she was for ever spreading for him in the *salons* of her own particular allies. Madame de Beaucœur did not figure amongst those redoubtable belligerents. When she called during the day at Madame de Chassedot's, Edgar was never there, and as the *habitués* of the Marquise's *Mardis soirs* were recruited chiefly amongst the old fogies and *dévotés* of the Faubourg—a class of

her fellow-creatures whom Madame de Beaucœur carefully avoided—there was no chance of his meeting her there in the evening. It was precisely this that made her mediation so precious to Madame de Chassedot; Edgar was disarmed before her; he did not mistrust her; and when, reconnoitring the company in the adjoining room, through the broad glass panel that divided the *salons*, he spied her sitting next a very pretty girl, the discovery gave him no shock. Madame de Beaucœur, catching his eye, nodded familiarly to him, and he at once made his way towards her, and took up a position behind her chair.

'I should like to go very much,' she said, continuing her conversation with Madame de Galliac; 'but I have not been there this year. One cannot go without a gentleman, and Monsieur de Beaucœur is always too busy in the evening to accompany me.'

'There are hundreds who would cross swords for the honour of replacing him, madame,' declared M. de Chassedot, stooping over her chair, and throwing into his voice and manner all the *empressement* which her position as a married woman authorised.

'Then you shall have the honour without crossing swords for it,' said the lady, briskly. 'Come and fetch me to-morrow evening at eight o'clock; unless you are equal to a *dîner de ménage* with myself and Monsieur de Beaucœur, and in that case come at half-past six.'

'Madame! Tant de bonté me confond!'

Madame de Beaucœur said, 'Au revoir' to the heiress and her mother, kissed hand to Berthe in the distance, and, granting M. de Chassedot's request to be allowed to see her to her carriage, they left the room together.

'Who is that young lady who

was sitting beside you, madame?' he asked, with some curiosity, when they were out of earshot on the staircase.

'Mademoiselle de Galliac. Did you never see her before?'

'Yes; but I did not know her name.

'How stupid of me! I ought to have presented you. She is a nice girl to talk to.'

'She's an uncommonly nice girl to look at. A l'honneur de vous revoir, madame; à demain soir.' And the carriage rolled off leaving M. de Chassedot bowing on the trottoir.

Punctual to the minute, he presented himself in Madame de Beaucoeur's drawing-room as the clock chimed the half-hour. M. de Beaucoeur had, of course, an appointment at the club, which, to his infinite regret, prevented his escorting his wife to the Concert Musard, so he remained sipping his *café noir*, and wished them a pleasant evening. The gardens, although they were only beginning to fill, presented a brilliant and animated appearance. The central pavilion, its roof and pillars girdled with light, glowed like the starry temple of an Arabian tale; while from within, the orchestra sent forth its melodic stream, now tender and plaintive as the zephyr wooing the rose at midnight, now loud and valiant in the rhythmic dance. Balls of light gleamed through the foliage, and made every tree stand out in radiant illumination. But not everywhere. Artistically mindful of the worth of contrast in scenic effect, the light distributed itself so as to leave parts of the garden in comparative shade. Here those who shrunk from the dazzling glare of the centre could walk and enjoy the scene and the music without inconvenience.

'Why, there is Madame de Gal-

liac, I declare! Let us go and meet her,' said Madame de Beaucoeur, walking on quickly. 'What an unexpected pleasure, madame! I thought you were going to the opera to-night?'

'So we were; but at the last moment we found there was a mistake about the box, and Henriette was so disappointed that, to console her, I proposed coming here for an hour.'

'Pauvre enfant! But I assure you it is no despicable compensation; the music is excellent. Let us go round by the left; the breeze is blowing from that quarter,' said Madame de Beaucoeur; and, without taking the slightest notice of M. de Chassedot, she turned to walk on with Madame de Galliac.

'Madame!' whispered the young man, touching her on the arm, and intimating by a sign that she had left him out in the cold.

'Oh! que je suis étourdie! Allow me to introduce you. Le Marquis de Chassedot—la Baronne de Galliac.'

'Ma fille, monsieur,' said the latter, pointing to Henriette.

Everybody having bowed to everybody, the party moved on, the young people walking in front. M. de Chassedot, serenely unconscious of being caught in a trap, and finding Henriette a lively, unaffected girl, talked away pleasantly, confining himself, of course, to authorised insipidities, such as the weather, the music, the decoration of the gardens, &c., and making himself, as he could do when he liked, very agreeable.

'Is not that the Comtesse de Bonton's voice?' said Henriette, stopping and bending her ear in the direction of the sound.

'I think it is. Let us walk on and see,' said her mother.

Now, though Madame de Beaucoeur liked Berthe, and was generally delighted to meet her any-

where, on this particular occasion she was the last person in Paris she cared to meet. It was not possible, however, to avoid her without awaking in M. de Chassedot's mind suspicions which might prove fatal to her benevolent designs on himself. When Berthe came up with the quartet her surprise was great, and though she said nothing her face expressed it so plainly that Henriette, being intelligent, noticed it, and bethought to herself that there must be some stronger reason for it than the ostensible one of meeting Madame de Beaucœur and Madame de Galliac at the Concert Musard.

Berthe had three gentlemen in attendance on her, a tall, *distingué*-looking Austrian, who spoke to no one, and squirted vinegar out of his eyes at a handsome young Breton, on whose arm Berthe leant, and an Englishman, whose notablest idiosyncrasy was an eyeglass that seemed a fixture in the right eye of the wearer, so immovably did it stick there morning, noon, and night. Over and above this guard of honour the beautiful widow was accompanied by Héléne de Karodel. She introduced the two girls, who walked on together, while the gentlemen and the three married women followed. Héléne and Mademoiselle de Galliac had not proceeded far, however, when they were joined by M. de Chassedot.

'Mademoiselle,' he said, addressing Héléne, 'I have just made a discovery; but it is of so agreeable a nature that, before I dare believe it, I must have your corroboration.'

'Indeed! said Héléne, with a look of surprise at the young man, who remained bare-headed awaiting her answer. 'Couvrez-vous, monsieur, and let us hear what this wonderful discovery is.'

'You are the daughter, I am

told, of that brave soldier and true gentleman, Christian de Karodel?'

'I am his daughter,' replied Héléne, her eye moistening with grateful emotion at hearing her father so named.

'He was my mother's first cousin, consequently I claim kinship with you,' concluded the young man.

'And your name is——?'

'Edgar de Chassedot.'

'Ah! yes, we are cousins, I believe; but as your family seemed quite to have forgotten the fact, we had almost forgotten it ourselves,' replied Héléne, coldly.

'Is it too late for us to remember it?' said Edgar, imperceptibly emphasizing the *us*, and throwing a gentle deference into his tone that subdued her.

'It is strange that you should care; but, since it is so, let us be cousins,' and Héléne held out her hand to him.

Six weeks after this promenade in the Jardin Musard there was a *dîner de contrat* at Madame de Galliac's. The *fiancé* wore the full dress uniform of a Chasseur d'Afrique. His bronzed features attested long residence under Algerian skies, and the stars and medals on his breast bore witness that his time had not passed there in idle dalliance. The plot against M. de Chassedot's liberty had collapsed, to the inexpressible vexation of his mother. Her case was really a hard one. She and the family lawyer had done their best; all the preliminaries for her son's marriage with Henriette's four millions had been gone through; everything was ready, when, the consent of the young people, as a necessary detail towards the final arrangement, was asked, and refused. It had somehow come to the young lady's ears that M. de Chassedot was no party to the business, and that if he allowed himself to be bullied into marrying her, it would

be *de son corps défendant*. Mademoiselle de Galliac there and then declared that she would be forced upon no man, were he Roi de France et de Navarre. And so this most eligible marriage, for want of a bride and bridegroom, fell through.

Madame de Beaucœur then called to mind a nephew of her husband's, who was serving in Africa. He was two millions short of Henriette's figure; but he had great expectations, and was in every other respect qualified for the place, and, moreover, he was willing to be married; he had written to his family, stating the fact, and requesting them to look out for a wife for him. Photographs were exchanged, character and principles inquired into, and vouched for satisfactorily—Henriette made this a *sine quâ non*—and within one month from the day that his aunt opened negotiations with Madame de Galliac, Alexandre de Beaucœur arrived in Paris, the affianced husband of Henriette de Galliac.

They were presented to each other at a morning reception, and met next day at the *dîner de contrat*. He took her in to dinner, Madame de Galliac saying to him, playfully, as Henriette accepted his arm,

'Maintenant faites votre cour!'

It was easier said than done. The position was embarrassing. M. de Beaucœur wished to avail himself of the opportunity to win his bride's affections; but, like most brave men, he was timid, and the more he strove to find something agreeable to say, the less he found it. When dessert was served, however, and the wine passed round, he plucked up courage, and bending over Henriette's glass, he murmured in a low voice,

'Mademoiselle, de quelle couleur voulez-vous votre voiture?'

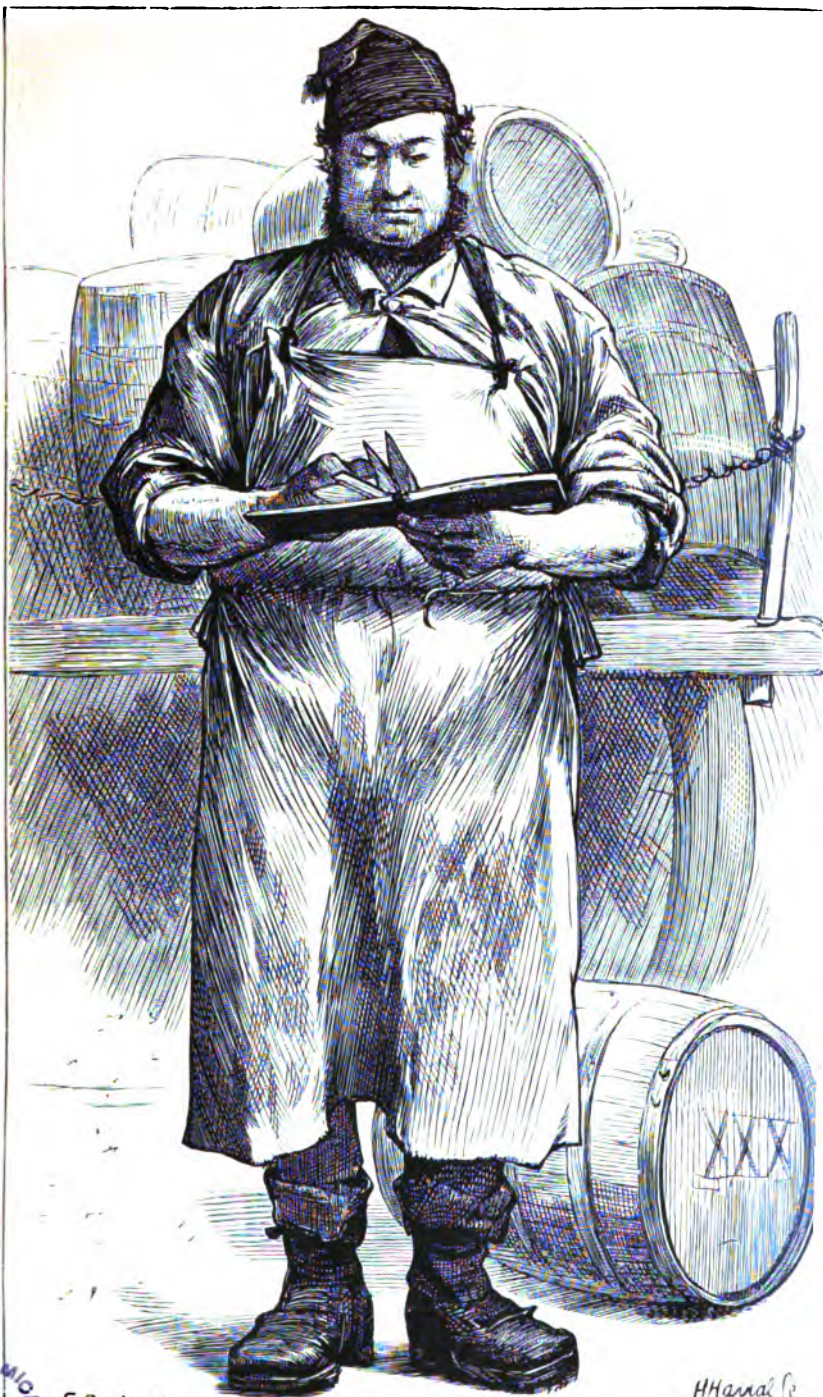
'Bleue, monsieur?' replied Henriette.

He bowed, and they relapsed into silence. This was all that passed between them till they swore at the altar to cling to each other until death did part them.

It may interest my readers, and it will, no doubt, surprise them to hear that this prosaic marriage turned out a singularly happy one. The young man was a gentleman, and he had a conscience and a heart. The girl was sensible, high-principled, and affectionate. They cared for no one else, and did their duty by each other. After all, the most romantic union seldom embarks with surer and fairer elements of happiness.

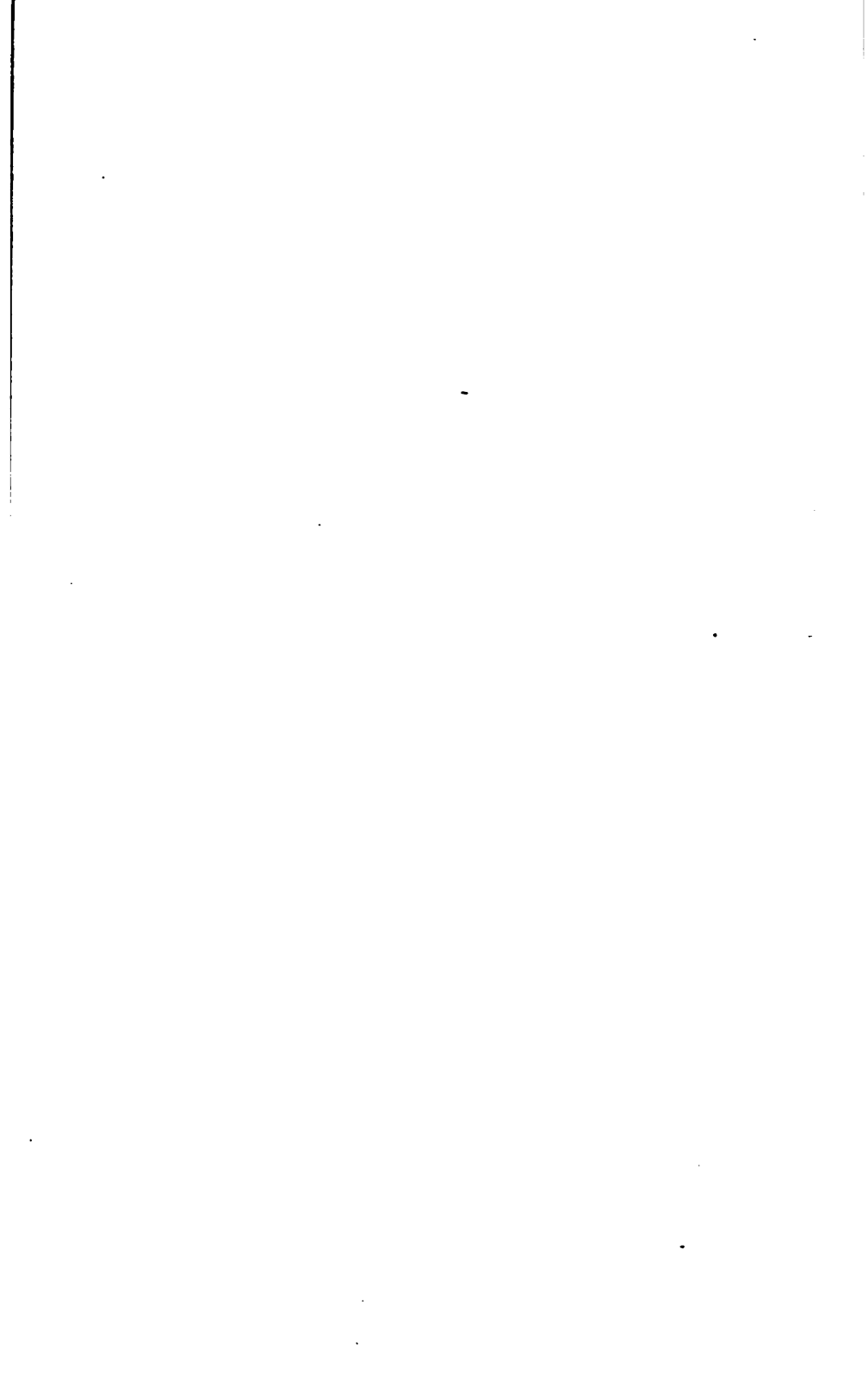
GRACE RAMSEY.





Drawn by E. Buckman

STUDIES OF STREET LIFE.—No. VII.
THE BREWER'S DRAYMAN.



MY LADY'S FAVOURS.

YOU have not seen my Bessie? beauty Bess—
 She is a shrew, a very pretty shrew;
 Cheeks like a blush rose leaf, sweet eyes and lips,
 Belong to Bessie, and she knows it, too,
 And it has taught her coquetry,
 She will not be what I would be—
 If I be so, why then so is not she.

If I am shy at Bessie, bonny Bess,
 She looks and laughs, and is not shy at me;
 But if I show her that I am not shy,
 She glances down, and very shy is she;
 There's nought, not even flattery,
 Will bid her be as I would be—
 If I do so, why then so does not she.

If I but smile at Bessie, beauty Bess,
 Straightway she turns aside and seems amiss
 But if I seem amiss and go away,
 She comes with loving looks to beg a kiss;
 Nor coolness nor civility
 Will bid her be as I would be—
 If I agree, why then so does not she.

If I be dull, my Bessie, beauty Bess,
 Will mock a sigh, and titter and be glad;
 If I be boisterous and very blythe,
 O very still is she and very sad;
 Big boldness nor meek modesty
 Will bid her be as I would be;
 If I would so, why then so would not she.

And yet I love my Bessie, birdie Bess,
 And I shall ask a question; if a nay
 Be her reply, I'll tell her woman's nay
 Is but a yea, so be it nay or yea,
 'Twill bid her be as I would be,
 So once I think we shall agree
 And when I go to church why so will she.

GUY ROSLYN.

THE CRYSTAL CUP.

BY ABRAHAM STOKER.

I.

THE DREAM-BIRTH.

THE blue waters touch the walls of the palace; I can hear their soft, lapping wash against the marble whenever I listen. Far out at sea I can see the waves glancing in the sunlight, ever-smiling, ever-glancing, ever-sunny. Happy waves!—happy in your gladness, thrice happy that ye are free!

I rise from my work and spring up the wall till I reach the embrasure. I grasp the corner of the stonework and draw myself up till I crouch in the wide window. Sea, sea, out away as far as my vision extends. There I gaze till my eyes grow dim; and in the dimness of my eyes my spirit finds its sight. My soul flies on the wings of memory away beyond the blue, smiling sea—away beyond the glancing waves and the gleaming sails, to the land I call my home. As the minutes roll by, my actual eyesight seems to be restored, and I look round me in my old birth-house. The rude simplicity of the dwelling comes back to me as something new. There I see my old books and manuscripts and pictures, and there, away on their old shelves, high up above the door, I see my first rude efforts in art.

How poor they seem to me now! And yet, were I free, I would not give the smallest of them for all I now possess. Possess? How I dream.

The dream calls me back to waking life. I spring down from my window-seat and work away frantically, for every line I draw on paper, every new form that springs on the plaster, brings me nearer freedom. I will make a

vase whose beauty will put to shame the glorious works of Greece in her golden prime! Surely a love like mine and a hope like mine must in time make some form of beauty spring to life! When He beholds it he will exclaim with rapture, and will order my instant freedom. I can forget my hate, and the deep debt of revenge which I owe him when I think of liberty—even from his hands. Ah! then on the wings of the morning shall I fly beyond the sea to my home—her home—and clasp her to my arms, never more to be separated!

But, oh Spirit of Day! if she should be—No, no, I cannot think of it, or I shall go mad. Oh Time, Time! maker and destroyer of men's fortunes, why hasten so fast for others whilst thou laggest so slowly for me? Even now my home may have become desolate, and she—my bride of an hour—may sleep calmly in the cold earth. Oh this suspense will drive me mad! Work, work! Freedom is before me; Aurora is the reward of my labour!

So I rush to my work; but to my brain and hand, heated alike, no fire or no strength descends. Half mad with despair, I beat myself against the walls of my prison, and then climb into the embrasure, and once more gaze upon the ocean, but find there no hope. And so I stay till night, casting its pall of blackness over nature, puts the possibility of effort away from me for yet another day.

So my days go on, and grow to weeks and months. So will they

grow to years, should life so long remain an unwelcome guest within me; for what is man without hope? and is not hope nigh dead within this weary breast?

* * * *

Last night, in my dreams, there came, like an inspiration from the Day-Spirit, a design for my vase.

All day my yearning for freedom—for Aurora, or news of her—had increased tenfold, and my heart and brain were on fire. Madly I beat myself, like a caged bird, against my prison-bars. Madly I leaped to my window-seat, and gazed with bursting eyeballs out on the free, open sea. And there I sat till my passion had worn itself out; and then I slept, and dreamed of thee, Aurora—of thee and freedom. In my ears I heard again the old song we used to sing together, when as children we wandered on the beach; when, as lovers, we saw the sun sink in the ocean, and I would see its glory doubled as it shone in thine eyes, and was mellowed against thy cheek; and when, as my bride, you clung to me as my arms went round you on that desert tongue of land whence rushed that band of sea-robbers that tore me away. Oh! how my heart curses those men—not men, but fiends! But one solitary gleam of joy remains from that dread encounter,—that my struggle stayed those hell-hounds, and that, ere I was stricken down, this right hand sent one of them to his home. My spirit rises as I think of that blow that saved thee from a life worse than death. With the thought I feel my cheeks burning, and my forehead swelling with mighty veins. My eyes burn, and I rush wildly round my prison-house. ‘Oh! for one of my enemies, that I might dash out his brains against these marble walls, and trample his heart out as he lay before me!’ These walls would

spare him not. They are pitiless, alas! I know too well. ‘Oh, cruel mockery of kindness, to make a palace a prison, and to taunt a captive’s aching heart with forms of beauty and sculptured marble!’ Wondrous, indeed, are these sculptured walls! Men call them passing fair; but oh, Aurora! with thy beauty ever before my eyes, what form that men call lovely can be fair to me? Like him who gazes sun-wards, and then sees no light on earth, from the glory that dyes his iris, so thy beauty or its memory has turned the fairest things of earth to blackness and deformity.

In my dream last night, when in my ears came softly, like music stealing across the waters from afar, the old song we used to sing together, then to my brain, like a ray of light, came an idea whose grandeur for a moment struck me dumb. Before my eyes grew a vase of such beauty that I knew my hope was born to life, and that the Great Spirit had placed my foot on the ladder that leads from this my palace-dungeon to freedom and to thee. To-day I have got a block of crystal—for only in such pellucid substance can I body forth my dream—and have commenced my work.

I found at first that my hand had lost its cunning, and I was beginning to despair, when, like the memory of a dream, there came back in my ears the strains of the old song. I sang it softly to myself, and as I did so I grew calmer; but oh! how differently the song sounded to me when thy voice, Aurora, rose not in unison with my own! But what avails pining? To work! To work! Every touch of my chisel will bring me nearer thee.

* * * *

My vase is daily growing nearer to completion. I sing as I work,

and my constant song is the one I love so well. I can hear the echo of my voice in the vase; and as I end, the wailing song note is prolonged in sweet, sad music in the crystal cup. I listen, ear down, and sometimes I weep as I listen, so sadly comes the echo to my song. Imperfect though it be, my voice makes sweet music, and its echo in the cup guides my hand towards perfection as I work. Would that thy voice rose and fell with mine, Aurora, and then the world would behold a vase of such beauty as never before woke up the slumbering fires of man's love for what is fair; for if I do such work in sadness, imperfect as I am in my solitude and sorrow, what would I do in joy, perfect when with thee? I know that my work is good as an artist, and I feel that it is as a man; and the cup itself, as it daily grows in beauty, gives back a clearer echo. Oh! if I worked in joy how gladly would it give back our voices! Then would we hear an echo and music such as mortals seldom hear; but now the echo, like my song, seems imperfect. I grow daily weaker; but still I work on—work with my whole soul—for am I not working for freedom and for thee.

My work is nearly done. Day by day, hour by hour, the vase grows more finished. Ever clearer comes the echo whilst I sing; ever softer, ever more sad and heart-rending comes the echo of the wail at the end of the song. Day by day I grow weaker and weaker; still I work on with all my soul. At night the thought comes to me, whilst I think of thee, that I will never see thee more—that I breathe out my life into the crystal cup, and that it will last there when I am gone.

So beautiful has it become, so

much do I love it, that I could gladly die to be maker of such a work, were it not for thee—for my love for thee, and my hope of thee, and my fear for thee, and my anguish for thy grief when thou knowest I am gone.

* * * *

My work requires but few more touches. My life is slowly ebbing away, and I feel that with my last touch my life will pass out for ever into the cup. Till that touch is given I must not die—I will not die. My hate has passed away. So great are my wrongs that revenge of mine would be too small a compensation for my woe. I leave revenge to a juster and a mightier than I. Thee, oh Aurora, I will await in the land of flowers, where thou and I will wander, never more to part, never more! Ah, never more! Farewell, Aurora—Aurora—Aurora!

* * * *

II.

THE FEAST OF BEAUTY.

The Feast of Beauty approaches rapidly, yet hardly so fast as my royal master wishes. He seems to have no other thought than to have this feast greater and better than any ever held before. Five summers ago his Feast of Beauty was nobler than all held in his sire's reign together; yet scarcely was it over, and the rewards given to the victors, when he conceived the giant project whose success is to be tested when the moon reaches her full. It was boldly chosen and boldly done; chosen and done as boldly as the project of a monarch should be. But still I cannot think that it will end well. This yearning after completeness must be unsatisfied in the end—this desire that makes a monarch fling his kingly justice to the winds,

and strive to reach his Mecca over a desert of blighted hopes and lost lives. But hush! I must not dare to think ill of my master or his deeds; and besides, walls have ears. I must leave alone these dangerous topics, and confine my thoughts within proper bounds.

The moon is waxing quickly, and with its fulness comes the Feast of Beauty, whose success as a whole rests almost solely on my watchfulness and care; for if the ruler of the feast should fail in his duty, who could fill the void? Let me see what arts are represented, and what works compete. All the arts will have trophies: poetry in its various forms, and prose-writing; sculpture with carving in various metals, and glass, and wood, and ivory, and engraving gems, and setting jewels; painting on canvas, and glass, and wood, and stone and metal; music, vocal and instrumental; and dancing. If that woman will but sing, we will have a real triumph of music; but she appears sickly too. All our best artists either get ill or die, although we promise them freedom or rewards or both if they succeed.

Surely never yet was a Feast of Beauty so fair or so richly dowered as this which the full moon shall behold and hear; but ah! the crowning glory of the feast will be the crystal cup. Never yet have these eyes beheld such a form of beauty, such a wondrous mingling of substance and light. Surely some magic power must have helped to draw such loveliness from a cold block of crystal. I must be careful that no harm happens the vase. To-day when I touched it, it gave forth such a ringing sound that my heart jumped with fear lest it should sustain any injury. Henceforth, till I deliver it up to my master, no hand but my own shall touch

it lest any harm should happen to it.

Strange story has that cup. Born to life in the cell of a captive torn from his artist home beyond the sea, to enhance the splendour of a feast by his labour—seen at work by spies, and traced and followed till a chance—cruel chance for him—gave him into the hands of the emissaries of my master. He too, poor moth, fluttered about the flame: the name of freedom spurred him on to exertion till he wore away his life. The beauty of that cup was dearly bought for him. Many a man would forget his captivity whilst he worked at such a piece of loveliness; but he appeared to have some sorrow at his heart, some sorrow so great that it quenched his pride.

How he used to rave at first! How he used to rush about this chamber, and then climb into the embrasure of his window, and gaze out away over the sea! Poor captive! perhaps over the sea some one waited for his coming who was dearer to him than many cups, even many cups as beautiful as this, if such could be on earth. . . . Well, well, we must all die soon or late, and who dies first escapes the more sorrow, perhaps, who knows? How, when he had commenced the cup, he used to sing all day long, from the moment the sun shot its first fiery arrow into the retreating hosts of night-clouds, till the shades of evening advancing drove the lingering sunbeams into the west—and always the same song!

How he used to sing, all alone! Yet sometimes I could almost imagine I heard not one voice from his chamber, but two. . . . No more will it echo again from the wall of a dungeon, or from a hill-side in free air. No more will his eyes behold the beauty of his crystal cup.

It was well he lived to finish it.

Often and often have I trembled to think of his death, as I saw him day by day grow weaker as he worked at the unfinished vase. Must his eyes never more behold the beauty that was born of his soul? Oh, never more! Oh Death, grim King of Terrors, how mighty is thy sceptre! All-powerful is the wave of thy hand that summons us in turn to thy kingdom away beyond the poles!

Would that thou, poor captive, hadst lived to behold thy triumph, for victory will be thine at the Feast of Beauty such as man never before achieved. Then thou mightst have heard the shout that hails the victor in the contest, and the plaudits that greet him as he passes out, a free man, through the palace gates. But now thy cup will come to light amid the smiles of beauty and rank and power, whilst thou liest there in thy lonely chamber, cold as the marble of its walls.

And, after all, the feast will be imperfect, since the victors cannot all be crowned. I must ask my master's direction as to how a blank place of a competitor, should he prove a victor, is to be filled up. So late? I must see him ere the noontide hour of rest be past.

* * * *

Great Spirit! how I trembled as my master answered my question!

I found him in his chamber, as usual in the noontide. He was lying on his couch disrobed, half-sleeping; and the drowsy zephyr, scented with rich odours from the garden, wafted through the windows at either side by the fans, lulled him to complete repose. The darkened chamber was cool and silent. From the vestibule came the murmuring of many fountains, and the pleasant splash of falling waters. 'Oh, happy,' said I, in my heart, 'oh, happy

great King, that has such pleasures to enjoy!' The breeze from the fans swept over the strings of the Æolian harps, and a sweet, confused, happy melody arose like the murmuring of children's voices singing afar off in the valleys, and floating on the wind.

As I entered the chamber softly, with muffled foot-fall and pent-in breath, I felt a kind of awe stealing over me. To me who was born and have dwelt all my life within the precincts of the court—to me who talk daily with my royal master, and take his minutest directions as to the coming feast—to me who had all my life looked up to my king as to a spirit, and had venerated him as more than mortal—came a feeling of almost horror; for my master looked then, in his quiet chamber, half-sleeping amid the drowsy music of the harps and fountains, more like a common man than a God. As the thought came to me I shuddered in affright, for it seemed to me that I had been guilty of sacrilege. So much had my veneration for my royal master become a part of my nature, that but to think of him as another man seemed like the anarchy of my own soul.

I came beside the couch, and watched him in silence. He seemed to be half-listening to the fitful music; and as the melody swelled and died away his chest rose and fell as he breathed in unison with the sound.

After a moment or two he appeared to become conscious of the presence of some one in the room, although by no motion of his face could I see that he heard any sound, and his eyes were shut. He opened his eyes, and, seeing me, asked, 'Was all right about the Feast of Beauty?' for that is the subject ever nearest to his thoughts. I answered that all was well, but that I had come to ask his royal

pleasure as to how a vacant place amongst the competitors was to be filled up. He asked, 'How vacant?' and on my telling him, 'from death,' he asked again, quickly, 'Was the work finished?' When I told him that it was, he lay back again on his couch with a sigh of relief, for he had half arisen in his anxiety as he asked the question. Then he said, after a minute, 'All the competitors must be present at the feast.' 'All?' said I. 'All,' he answered again, 'alive or dead; for the old custom must be preserved, and the victors crowned.' He stayed still for a minute more, and then said, slowly, 'Victors or martyrs.' And I could see that the kingly spirit was coming back to him.

Again he went on, 'This will be my last Feast of Beauty; and all the captives shall be set free. Too much sorrow has sprung already from my ambition. Too much injustice has soiled the name of king.'

He said no more, but lay still and closed his eyes. I could see by the working of his hands and the heaving of his chest that some violent emotion troubled him, and the thought arose, 'He is a man, but he is yet a king; and, though a king as he is, still happiness is not for him. Great Spirit of Justice! thou metest out his pleasures and his woes to man, to king and slave alike! Thou lovest best to whom thou givest peace!'

Gradually my master grew more calm, and at length sunk into a gentle slumber; but even in his sleep he breathed in unison with the swelling murmur of the harps.

'To each is given,' said I gently, 'something in common with the world of actual things. Thy life, oh King, is bound by chains of sympathy to the voice of Truth, which is Music! Tremble, lest in the presence of a master-strain thou

shouldst feel thy littleness, and die!' and I softly left the room.

* * * *

III.

THE STORY OF THE MOONBEAM.

Slowly I creep along the bosom of the waters.

Sometimes I look back as I rise upon a billow, and see behind me many of my kin sitting each upon a wave-summit as upon a throne. So I go on for long, a power that I wist not forcing me onward, without will or purpose of mine.

At length, as I rise upon a mimic wave, I see afar a hazy light that springs from a vast palace, through whose countless windows flame lamps and torches. But at the first view, as if my coming had been the signal, the lights disappear in an instant.

Impatiently I await what may happen; and as I rise with each heart-beat of the sea, I look forward to where the torches had gleamed. Can it be a deed of darkness that shuns the light?

* * * *

The time has come when I can behold the palace without waiting to mount upon the waves. It is built of white marble, and rises steep from the brine. Its sea-front is glorious with columns and statues; and from the portals the marble steps sweep down, broad and wide to the waters, and below them, down as deep as I can see.

No sound is heard, no light is seen. A solemn silence abounds, a perfect calm.

Slowly I climb the palace walls, my brethren following as soldiers up a breach. I slide along the roofs, and as I look behind me walls and roofs are glistening as with silver. At length I meet with something smooth and hard and translucent; but through it I pass and enter a vast hall, where

for an instant I hang in mid-air and wonder.

My coming has been the signal for such a burst of harmony as brings back to my memory the music of the spheres as they rush through space; and in the full-swellling anthem of welcome I feel that I am indeed a sun-spirit, a child of light, and that this is homage to my master.

I look upon the face of a great monarch, who sits at the head of a banquet-table. He has turned his head upwards and backwards, and looks as if he had been awaiting my approach. He rises and fronts me with the ringing out of the welcome-song, and all the others in the great hall turn towards me as well. I can see their eyes gleaming. Down along the immense table, laden with plate and glass and flowers, they stand holding each a cup of ruby wine, with which they pledge the monarch when the song is ended, as they drink success to him and to the 'Feast of Beauty.'

I survey the hall. An immense chamber, with marble walls covered with bas-reliefs and frescoes and sculptured figures, and panelled by great columns that rise along the surface and support a dome-ceiling painted wondrously; in its centre the glass lantern by which I entered.

On the walls are hung pictures of various forms and sizes, and down the centre of the table stretches a raised platform on which are placed works of art of various kinds.

At one side of the hall is a dais on which sit persons of both sexes with noble faces and lordly brows, but all wearing the same expression—care tempered by hope. All these hold scrolls in their hands.

At the other side of the hall is a similar dais, on which sit others fairer to earthly view, less spiritual

and more marked by surface-passion. They hold music-scores. All these look more joyous than those on the other platform, all save one, a woman, who sits with downcast face and dejected mien, as of one without hope. As my light falls at her feet she looks up, and I feel happy. The sympathy between us has called a faint gleam of hope to cheer that poor pale face.

Many are the forms of art that rise above the banquet-table, and all are lovely to behold. I look on all with pleasure one by one, till I see the last of them at the end of the table away from the monarch, and then all the others seem as nothing to me. What is this that makes other forms of beauty seem as nought when compared with it, when brought within the radius of its lustre? A crystal cup, wrought with such wondrous skill that light seems to lose its individual glory as it shines upon it and is merged in its beauty. 'Oh Universal Mother, let me enter there. Let my life be merged in its beauty, and no more will I regret my sun-strength hidden deep in the chasms of my moon-mother. Let me live there and perish there, and I will be joyous whilst it lasts, and content to pass into the great vortex of nothingness to be born again when the glory of the cup has fled.'

Can it be that my wish is granted, that I have entered the cup and become a part of its beauty? 'Great Mother, I thank thee.'

Has the cup life? or is it merely its wondrous perfectness that makes it tremble, like a beating heart, in unison with the ebb and flow, the great wave-pulse of nature? To me it feels as if it had life.

I look through the crystal walls and see at the end of the table, isolated from all others, the figure of a man seated. Are those cords that bind his limbs? How suits

that crown of laurel those wide, dim eyes, and that pallid hue? It is passing strange. This Feast of Beauty holds some dread secrets, and sees some wondrous sights.

I hear a voice of strange, rich sweetness, yet wavering—the voice of one *almost* a king by nature. He is standing up; I see him through my palace-wall. He calls a name and sits down again.

Again I hear a voice from the platform of scrolls, the Throne of Brows; and again I look and behold a man who stands trembling yet flushed, as though the morning light shone bright upon his soul. He reads in cadenced measure a song in praise of my moon-mother, the Feast of Beauty, and the king. As he speaks, he trembles no more, but seems inspired, and his voice rises to a tone of power and grandeur, and rings back from walls and dome. I hear his words distinctly, though saddened in tone, in the echo from my crystal home. He concludes and sits down, half-fainting, amid a whirlwind of applause, every note, every beat of which is echoed as the words had been.

Again the monarch rises and calls 'Aurora,' that she may sing, for freedom. The name echoes in the cup with a sweet, sad sound. So sad, so despairing seems the echo, that the hall seems to darken and the scene to grow dim.

'Can a sun-spirit mourn, or a crystal vessel weep?'

She, the dejected one, rises from her seat on the Throne of Sound, and all eyes turn upon her save those of the pale one, laurel-crowned. Thrice she essays to begin, and thrice nought comes from her lips but a dry, husky sigh, till an old man who has been moving round the hall settling all things, cries out, in fear lest she should fail, 'Freedom!'

The word is re-echoed from the

cup. She hears the sound, turns towards it and begins.

Oh, the melody of that voice! And yet it is not perfect alone; for after the first note comes an echo from the cup that swells in unison with the voice, and the two sounds together, seem as if one strain came ringing sweet from the lips of the All-Father himself. So sweet it is, that all throughout the hall sit spell-bound, and scarcely dare to breathe.

In the pause after the first verses of the song, I hear the voice of the old man speaking to a comrade, but his words are unheard by any other, 'Look at the king. His spirit seems lost in a trance of melody. Ah! I fear me some evil: the nearer the music approaches to perfection the more rapt he becomes. I dread lest a perfect note shall prove his death-call.' His voice dies away as the singer commences the last verse.

Sad and plaintive is the song; full of feeling and tender love, but love overshadowed by grief and despair. As it goes on the voice of the singer grows sweeter and more thrilling, more real; and the cup, my crystal time-home, vibrates more and more as it gives back the echo. The monarch looks like one entranced, and no movement is within the hall. . . . The song dies away in a wild wail that seems to tear the heart of the singer in twain; and the cup vibrates still more as it gives back the echo. As the note, long-swell-ing, reaches its highest, the cup, the Crystal Cup, my wondrous home, the gift of the All-Father, shivers into millions of atoms, and passes away.

Ere I am lost in the great vortex I see the singer throw up her arms and fall, freed at last, and the King sitting, glory-faced, but pallid with the hue of Death.

* * * *

'LA HAUTE ÉCOLE.'

I.

A LONG, oval tent, half stable, half green-room of Harman's circus, for it was a travelling circus and not given to overloading itself with superfluous baggage, badly lighted, strong smelling, the canvas brown with wear and old age, the grass underfoot beaten down by the hoofs of the horses and trodden into the miry ground; an animated scene, with the riders and attendants and musicians scattered about, but strange and novel to me, standing there, while John Harman, erst groom to my father, rested himself after the fatigues of the first part of the programme. He was sitting astride his chair, with his thumbs caught in the armholes of his waistcoat, and his round, red face alternately serious and merry as he ran over his history of the last ten years. He left us to help his brother, who was always in the horseman-ship line, in the management of the circus; but, since then, Tom Harman had died and our old groom become the sole proprietor.

'Tom would be pleased to see the old place and the people to-night,' he said, nodding at the curtain, which shut off the ring and the crowded seats, where the spectators were awaiting the second part of the programme. 'And he would be pleased to see Ali and Mamzelle there, poor Tom would. And to see her ride too. Look at them, Mr. George. They look like a picture, don't they?'

He pointed to a white Arab horse, standing close behind me, with a girl in a tall riding hat and dark blue habit upon the saddle. She looked up with a

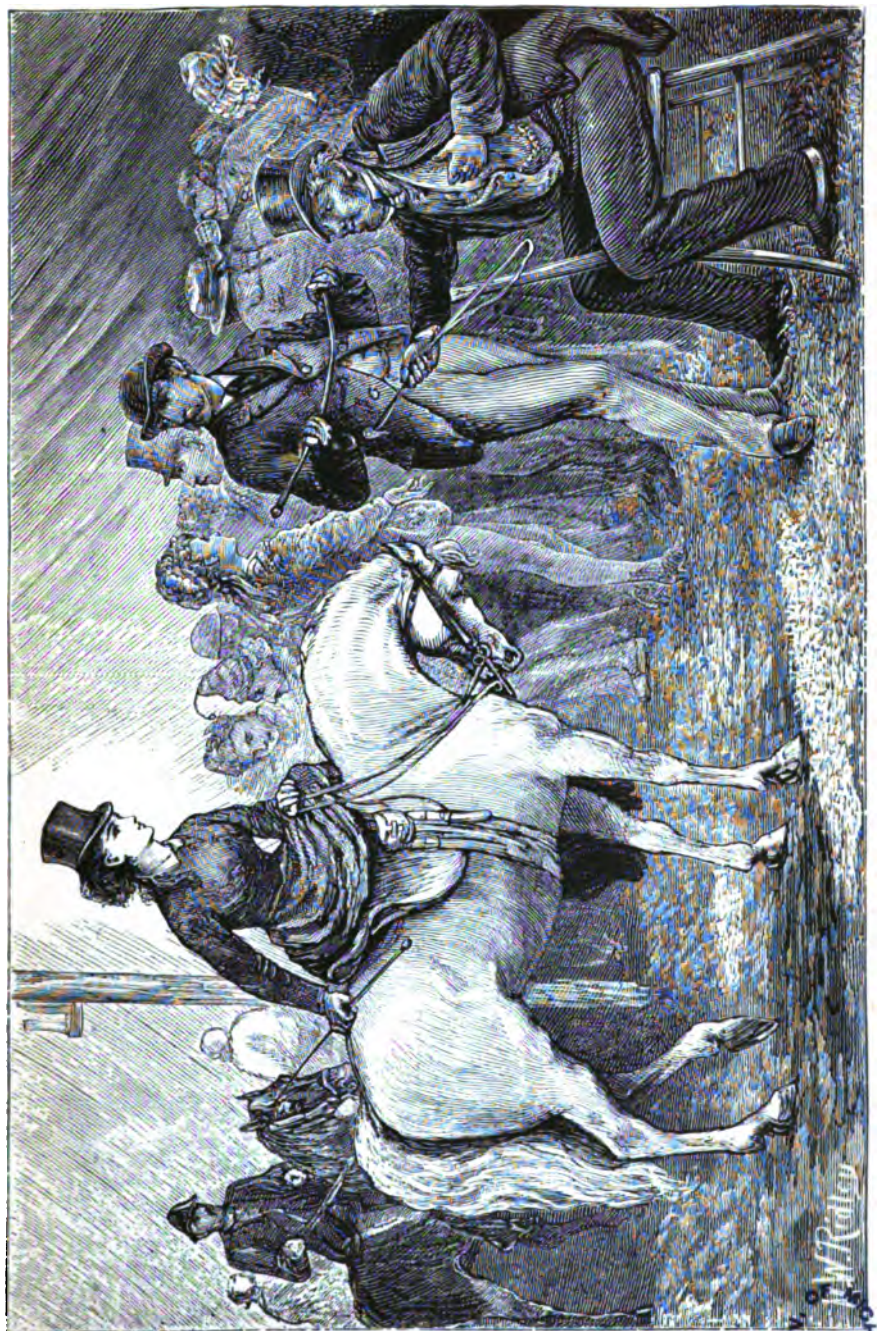
slight smile at Harman's remark, and then flushed and started visibly as our eyes met.

'Hullo! Mamzelle!' laughed Harman. 'Did you fancy he was going to join us, and were you thinking what a pretty clown he would make?'

He rose from his chair, and, leaning against the horse's shoulder, looked up at the girl with a merry grimace. But she took no notice of him; there came no answering smile this time upon her face. It was a beautiful face, too, with delicate, regular features and a warm, southern tint, dark as a Spaniard's, but it seemed haughty and fierce as the flush and the smile died out, and her large eyes were fixed upon mine with a troubled look, as if I reminded her of some one whom she had seen before, and her thoughts were busy in recalling the past.

'Well! well! Mamzelle,' said Harman, as though she had answered his last question. 'If you don't think he will do for a clown, we'll put him upon a horse, and he can go in for your line. He can ride a little. I taught him to ride almost before he could walk. Didn't I, Mr. George?' appealing to me. 'And what a mite you looked upon old Thistle-down that day, to be sure; and now, you are a man and an officer, and will be marrying soon, no doubt, and having mites of your own.'

The girl's lips moved when Harman said that I was an officer; but he turned away, without waiting for her to speak, and called out to the men at the other side



Drawn by M. W. Ridley.]

LA HAUTE ÉCOLE.

[See Page 236.]

of the tent, 'Come! come! make haste there. That's enough, Bill,' singling out one poor fellow who showed less alacrity than the others. 'Put down that can. Time's up, I tell you.' But Bill winking apologetically over the rim of the can, finished the beer before obeying the order, and Harman busied himself in examining the girth and trappings of the Arab.

'You may make your fortune to-night, Mamzelle,' he said, glancing up at her. 'There are a lot of swells in the front row. There goes the music. Are you all ready? Good!' and pushing aside the curtain he led the horse a few steps into the ring.

It was the first night of the circus at Helstonleigh, and the words of the programme, '*Cheval de la haute École*,' "*Ali*," introduced by *Mademoiselle Celestine Dupont*, had probably perplexed the rustics not a little as to what was coming: but when the white Arab and his splendid rider appeared they applauded loudly. Their applause was louder by and by as the performance went on; they were not insensible to the girl's beauty and grace—for she rode wonderfully well, sitting as square as a die upon her saddle, with her rounded figure, in its close fitting habit, swaying, as the horse galloped, and capered, and danced, as easily as a well-built carriage swings in its straps.

Mademoiselle 'told' as Harman had expected she would, and, if she pleased the rustics, she created quite a sensation among the 'swells in the front row.' They were mostly officers; many of them cavalry men, for both branches were quartered at Helstonleigh. Hitherto they had not been bored more than was proper at a country circus. They were quietly indifferent to the charms of the young lady, who jumped

through hoops and over banners lowered nearly on to the horse's back; and they had been altogether callous to the sublimity of the shipwrecked sailor saying his prayers on a 'bare-backed steed,' but here was a performance more to their taste, perfect grace in both horse and rider, such as they had not expected to see. It was they who applauded the most; it was they who led the recall when the performance was over. Harman was in ecstasies of delight. 'I knew she would make a hit,' he kept saying, rubbing his hands, as I could remember seeing him, when our favourite colt came galloping down the course at Broughton Market, half a length a-head of the rest for the town plate. And when the girl returned the second time into the tent, as the applause still continued, he led the horse again towards the curtain for the further recall.

'I am not going in again to-night,' she said shortly, jerking the reins out of his hands and checking the horse.

'But Mamzelle! Listen.'

'I don't care. They may pull the place down before I will go.' She gathered up her habit and withdrew her foot from the stirrup. 'Will you help me down?' she asked, putting out her hands.

'No! no! they want you again.'

'Let them,' she replied, her dark eyes flashing like jewels as the light caught them. And, without waiting for his help, she sprang recklessly from the saddle.

Harman muttered something as the girl stood before him, with her face, slightly flushed from the exercise, thrown proudly back, and shrugging his shoulders, went out into the ring. The applause increased for a minute as he appeared, and then died away. The music struck up again, and the

next lot went in, comprising all those who remained in the tent.

Drawing the gauntlet off her hand, the girl stood by the horse, fondling its soft nose, till one of the grooms approached to lead it away. Then, walking slowly, backwards and forwards, over the trodden grass, she waited till the man left the tent, and as soon as he was gone, she came towards me with her gliding step.

'Why did you not go in for your second recall, Mademoiselle?' I asked. 'No wonder they——'

'I did not choose to, Monsieur,' she said, cutting me short; but speaking less imperiously than she had spoken to Harman. The flush had faded from her face, and the defiant look, with which she had looked at him, had died out of her eyes; and, somehow, the girl, who sprang off her horse five minutes before, seemed changed into a woman. The same number of years, probably, had passed over our heads; but she seemed infinitely older than I from her manner, and she looked older, too, than her age, now that I saw her close, as she took off her tall hat and pushed back the dark hair from her temples with her ungloved hand. My intended compliment, such as it was, vanished before her quick answer. She came close to me—so close, that I could have put my hands upon her rounded shoulders, and said in a quiet, earnest voice, strangely different to the way she had spoken before, with a slight foreign accent for the first time becoming noticeable.

'How did you come to know Mr. Harman?'

'He was groom to my father, when I was quite a little fellow.'

'Where?'

'At home. At Waltonhill.'

'Your name?'

I could no more help answering

her questions, than I could help looking into the depths of her great, dark eyes, that held me under their spell.

'George Fordyce.'

'George,' she repeated, as though she knew I was a Fordyce before I spoke.

'Yes.' But the girl hesitated; she did not move away, though she looked no longer up in my face. She was not satisfied; her motive, whatever it was, for asking these questions, was not answered. I saw her lips tremble and the colour every now and then flush over her brow. There was something more she wanted to know, but she was at a loss how to ask it; there might be some secret she feared to betray: pride, doubt, honour, who could tell what was struggling in her mind; and she was silent. Rushing impetuously, as it were, to her succour, while I could feel the blood tingling in my ears as she glanced up with timid, wistful eyes, as though she longed to speak and durst not, I blurted out in a thoughtless, eager manner.

'What is it? What do you want to ask about my family? Tell me and trust me.'

I was too candid, too bluff; in a diplomatic sense I made a great mistake. But I was young and not accustomed to fencing in my speech; and though I startled her, and trod so roughly upon her half-willing confidence, as to scatter it to the winds, she saw that I was sincere; but her timidity vanished as I spoke, and Mademoiselle Dupont was again as a stranger to me.

'I—I want to know nothing about your family. Why should I?' And she laughed a little at my brusqueness. 'You reminded me of some one I have seen. That's all.'

'Of the same name?' I asked

quickly, turning the tables unexpectedly upon her, so that the fierce look flashed momentarily into her eyes, till she laughed again.

'Pish! What a boy it is,' she said, moving away. Then she turned round and looked at me again, but there was a sad smile upon her lips. 'I was a little curious, that was all. Don't think about it, except to remember that I am grateful to you.' And, before I could answer, with a slight bow she hurried out of the tent.

Perplexed by the girl's manner and angry with myself, I loitered about the circus, till the people left. Mademoiselle was an enigma: she had evidently seen better days than those spent with Harman's troupe; but who was she—what did she know about my family? I did not tell Harman that she had spoken to me, but I asked him about her, as we stood in the open air, when the performance was over. The circus and tent were behind us, both dark and shut up for the night; but the different vans in front were ablaze with light; all save one, which stood apart from the rest, an ugly, top-heavy, black object in the bright moonlight, with only a dull, red glimmer shining through the blinds.

'That's hers,' said Harman, pointing to it. 'Bless you! she goes it like a queen among us; always lives there, and never comes near the rest of the troupe at the public. I know little about her. She's as high-spirited as a thorough-bred. They won't bear the curb, nor she either. But she rides well and she draws, so I put up with her whims. One can't have everything you know. True, she hasn't been always in this line, that's clear; but I don't know what she was before she came to me. Let me see. It's

nearly three years ago. We were at Callford, and I was just leaving the tent, after looking at the horses and things, as I did a minute ago, when up she comes, all muddy and footsore, and asks me to help her. I had a lantern in my hand, and I turned its light upon her as she spoke; and her great, black eyes and pale face—it was paler then than it is now—somehow made me take a fancy to her there and then. I got one of the women to lodge her for the night, and give her something to eat; and she has been with me ever since. With all her whims and high manners I like the girl, and all the troupe like her, for she's mortal kind if any of them are in trouble. May be she has had some of that herself. I think she has, but she's very close, and I have never asked her. See! that's the little girl—Harry the clown's daughter—who waits upon her, and she teaches the little thing to read and write, and speak her own foreign language.'

The child thus pointed out was coming down the steps of the van. She turned round when she reached the grass to say, 'Good-night' again, before she ran off. And Mademoiselle, from inside, answered 'Good-night, and then came to watch the child. She closed the lower half of the door in a dreamy, unconscious manner, and, resting her arms upon it, leant forward, looking up at the sky. She was still in her riding-habit; and the moonlight fell full upon her as she stood there, with a weary look in her upturned face, and great, heavy tears gathering slowly and glistening down her cheeks.

'Eh! eh! Mamzelle,' broke out Harman, speaking with more than his ordinary kindness. 'Why, what's the matter? And after your success to-night, too.'

The sound of his voice broke her dream, for she started up. Instead of answering, she bent her head and went quickly back into the van. And as the door closed behind her, the moonlight streamed coldly upon its hearse-like paint.

II.

From the depths of my arm-chair, and behind the smoke of his own cigar, Reginald Fordyce—captain in the —th Dragoon Guards—was going to deliver a lecture.

He and I were cousins; we had not met for some years—not since I was at school; and the moment he entered my rooms I was struck by the likeness between us. We were about the same height, with the same coloured hair and the same kind of features, altogether very much alike, though he wore a long moustache, and his face was tanned to a deep brown by an Indian sun, and he had a lazy, nonchalant, individual manner, none of which I had yet attained. In age he was about six years my senior, and I knew but little about him, except that he used to go to my home for a month or so during the shooting season, when I was at school. I heard a tale about his getting into difficulties a short time before he exchanged into his present regiment, which was then quartered in India. That was in the vacation, after I left school; he was staying with us just before he went, and I had not seen him since then until that night, when he had walked into my rooms at the barracks. He was home on sick leave, and had come down to Helstonleigh, where his old regiment was quartered.

'Are you going to Mrs. Chesnut's *soirée* to-night, George?' he

had asked. 'What is the attraction there? Winter, Ullathorne, and all the other fellows are off.'

'Good looks, youth, and money.'

'Quite enough. Mrs. or Miss?'

'Two misses.'

'Are you going?' he had then asked again.

'No, I am going somewhere else.'

It was the last night of the circus, and Mademoiselle's benefit, and I was going there.

'Isn't there a circus down the town?' he had said, after a little pause. 'I heard the fellows talking about it. Winter told me they were all hot about one of the girls, who was awfully pretty; but that you had cut them all out, for you had the *entrée* behind the —; I was going to say the scenes; well, behind the ring. It's Harman's circus, I suppose?'

So I guessed immediately that I was in for a lecture, and that my cousin had come to my rooms expressly for that purpose. But he was not Mademoiselle, with her dark eyes and beautiful face; and I felt neither inclined to listen nor let him have it all his own way. He had no right, I thought, to come and bother himself and bore me about matters that did not concern him. I was quite old enough to take care of myself. But then, on the other hand, a lecture from him had all the charms of a novelty, and I was a little curious to see what efficiency he had gained in his new line. And, as he seemed so intent upon relieving his conscience, I thought it would be unbecoming in me—his junior—to prevent him.

'Yes,' I said, 'it's Harman's circus. He has an awfully pretty rider there, so I am fortunate in having the *entrée* behind the ring, as you call it.'

But Reginald did not imme-

diately break out into a lofty strain, as I half expected. When it came to the point lecturing seemed to be distasteful to him. He allowed his cigar, apparently, to engross all his thoughts, and he pulled his long moustache abstractedly, till at last, when a thick cloud of smoke nearly hid his face, he said, quietly—

'You think you are fortunate in having the *entrées* behind the ring. Surely you have heard the proverb about a burnt child fearing the fire. When I was a little older than you are now I burnt my fingers very badly in somewhat the same way. I have lived to feel the smart, so I don't want you to do the same. You understand, George?'

I was sobered directly. It was not a long lecture, but had there been any occasion for a lecture at all, it would have sufficed. By referring to himself he gave it a point, a much greater one, it may be, than he thought, for there were incidents in his past life that were known to me, though he was not aware of it.

Mixed up with the story of his difficulties was a story about a girl; such things are generally kept quiet, and I, probably, should never have heard it, but from the circumstance that I once took a letter to him into our garden at home. It was just before he exchanged and went to India; and he was hiding from his creditors until they could be pacified and his difficulties smoothed over. As a matter of fact, his debts were paid by an uncle; and, often and often, I had heard him and other members of the family wonder what made Reginald leave his old regiment and hurry out of England. I guessed at the time, I remember, that the letter I gave him had something to do with his going. It came in an envelope

directed to my father, with a short note, in a woman's handwriting, but without any name, begging him to send it on to Reginald if he knew his address. I happened to be in the room when the post-bag was opened, and I was bidden to take the letter to my cousin. After a short hunt I found him in the garden, lying lazily on the grass, smoking his meerschaum in the sunshine. He didn't look much like a man in difficulty, I thought, lolling there, humming fragments of tunes, with the blue smoke curling from his lips; and, boy-like, I envied his careless nature that could take troubles so easily.

'Well, young 'un,' he cried out, as I approached; 'what's that?'

'Another bill, I suppose,' I said.

'How came it here, then?'

'In a letter directed to the governor, asking him to send it on to you.'

'Hand over, then.' and, without rising, he took it from me.

I have never forgotten seeing him read that letter. I was not so very young, as things go. I had just left school, but it was the first time I saw a man overcome.

He evidently knew the handwriting, for he gave a low, pleased laugh as he opened the envelope. At the first few lines I noticed that his limbs stiffened and his face grew hard, but he read it through without moving. Then his hand dropped as if he had been stunned, but a great oath hissed out between his lips; and, unmindful of my presence, he sprang to his feet, and paced up and down the grass, clenching his teeth, crushing the letter in his hand, and calling out aloud 'to God' that the man had lied. He left us that evening, and soon

after I heard that he had gone to India.

I only knew but the barest outlines of that story, and those, not altogether correct, I learnt from a friend of Reginald, who was with him in his old regiment. When the crash came my cousin managed, somehow, to secure a little money, which he sent to the girl, whoever she was. It never reached her. Consequent upon its loss, but unknown to him, followed poverty—almost starvation—and the girl fled. And the letter from her, written in her anger, was the letter I gave him when he was lolling in the sunshine in our quiet garden at home.

That was why his lecture carried such a point with it. He had bought his experience—'burnt his fingers,' as he said—and lived to feel the smart: and, with men of the world like him, who could tell whether the pain was not still stinging.

'Yes, yes. I understand, Reginald,' I said; 'but I will give you my word that I have not burnt my fingers at all.'

'Good! I am glad of that,' he rejoined, with a relieved air. 'I fancied, from what I heard, you had been going it warmly.'

The little clock on the mantel-shelf struck nine.

'Is that right?' he asked, glancing up at it. 'I suppose you are going to the circus. Shall I be *de trop*? I should like to see Harman again.'

When our coats were on, the candles blown out, and the room lighted only by the fire, I said—

'Did you ever find the writer of a letter I once brought you in our garden, Reginald?'

He turned round quickly, and looked at me with astonishment.

'Was it you?' he said. 'Yes: I remember. I was a little ex-

cited about it, wasn't I? What made you ask that question? Well! no; I have never found the writer. Come, are you ready?'

Though he spoke in a careless manner, as if it were a mere trifle, there was a hard ring in his voice that told me that his smart was still stinging.

III.

There were not many 'swells in the front row' of the circus that night; the reserved seats were nearly empty—they had been enlarged since the first performance by the addition of the second row; but all the back benches were crowded, though Mrs. Ches-hunt's *soirée* had robbed Harman of his 'swells,' and Mademoiselle of her greatest admirers.

Seeing a place where there was a great, vacant space in these two reserved rows, Reginald and I went to it, and took our seats exactly opposite the entrance of the ring from the inner tent.

'We are just in time; are we not?' he asked. 'I see your fair rider appears at the commencement of the second vart.'

He was looking at the empty orchestra and the people settling themselves on their seats, or he would have seen her by the curtain. I caught sight of her face for a minute, bending forward over the horse's head, and of Harman by her side, pointing us out.

I had hardly spoken to the girl since the first night; she had not lingered again in the tent, as she did then; a few words, or a bow, as she passed through to her own van, was all the recompense I received for my nightly attendance. She had changed somehow since her arrival at Helstonleigh. She was more docile, as Harman termed it, as if he were speaking

about a horse; and yet I fancied he would rather have had her wayward and imperious as before.

'I can't make out what's the matter with her,' he said to me. 'She seems upset and out of sorts. Perhaps she will be better when we leave here.'

'Perhaps,' I answered, and kept my own counsel; but it was not without a feeling of regret at the thought of her leaving with her secret untold, and the one way in which I felt I could help her barred against me. I had not gone to Mrs. Cheshunt's *soirée*, because that night would be my last chance of speaking to Mademoiselle. As Reginald was with me I went into the ring; if I had been by myself I should have gone straight into the inner tent. I was inwardly chafing at being tied to him, when an accident happened which gave me an excuse for leaving.

I had seen the girl waiting as usual behind the curtain, seen Harman talking to her and pointing us out, but when the musicians returned and struck up she was not forthcoming. The audience waited quietly at first; it was not till the men commenced the old tune for the second time that they began to show signs of impatience. The noise increased steadily, drowning the music, as the delay continued. There was a hitch somewhere; ten minutes had gone, and Mademoiselle had not appeared.

'I'll go and see what's the matter,' I said. 'Will you come?' 'Not now. I'll come afterwards.'

So, leaving him there, I quitted the ring, and hastened round to the entrance of the inner tent.

'What are you waiting for?' I asked of the fellow, who made way for me to pass.

'Something to do with that

French girl,' he answered, gruffly, as I went in. The delay was over. I saw the white flanks of the horse as the curtain fell behind it, and heard the impatient stamping of the people turn to applause at the sight of their favourite.

'She forgot something, I suppose,' said one of the men in the tent, speaking to me; 'for she went back to her van and kept us all waiting.'

That was all then — a mere trifle; but it had given me an excuse for getting away from Reginald, and I was glad it had occurred. I did not want him by my side when I spoke to Mademoiselle; and, by moving the curtain a little, I could watch her riding in the ring from where I stood. I had done so before. I had been in the tent every night when she came in after her performance: this time I intended to tell her I wanted to speak to her and ask her to wait.

Peeping from behind the curtain, I saw my cousin in his seat exactly opposite. He was not looking at the girl. He was sitting there, with his arms folded and his head thrown back, taking no notice of her, but staring at the canvas covering straight in front of him. To any one who did not know him he might seem to be merely indifferent to what was going on, but to me the expression of his face recalled immediately my remembrance of him as he read the letter in our garden at home. There was the same rigid hardness; it was sterner to-night than it was when he lay on the grass in the sunshine; less passionate, but more austere, more unrelenting: not a feature was altered or contorted; as he sat there he looked like a stone statue of himself, with living eyes, that shone with a cold, pitiless light.

A conviction flashed across me, and as a sudden noise in the night, startling the sleeper, rouses into instant life all his dormant senses, so half-forgotten words, descriptions, speeches crowded into my mind with overwhelming proof that the writer of the letter, the cause of my cousin's going to India, the girl he had sought but never found, was before me. It was my likeness to him that she had recognized; it was about him that she had hesitated to ask me. I saw her face, as she was borne past, with its haughty, fierce expression returned, and all the passion of her nature blazing in her eyes, and, at the sight of it, I dropped the curtain, and turned away.

Harman was standing in the ring. He had never done so before; but, as I paced the tent, wondering what would be the end of the meeting, I heard his voice calling out to the men to be sharp. He had come in to fetch the wooden stage, up which the horse mounted nightly and stood with its four hoofs close together upon the small, round summit.

'Ah, Mr. George,' he said, as we met in the middle of the tent, 'Wasn't that Mr. Reginald with you? I hardly knew him at first, What makes him stop there?'

He looked tired and worried, and the tone of his voice was so irritable, that I hardly noticed the strangeness of his question.

'What's the matter, Harman?' I asked. 'Mademoiselle been putting you out? What made her so late? You look awfully out of sorts.'

'I am out of sorts,' he said, shortly, and glancing round to see that nobody overheard him; 'and, more than that, I'm nervous. You may laugh if you like, I am not given to that kind of feeling. You know that.'

'Yes; I know that. But what are you nervous about? Everybody seems to have something the matter with them to-night.'

'And a cursed deal too much, some have,' he answered sharply; 'and that girl's one. When I saw you and Mr. Reginald come in, I called her and pointed you out. I did it to cheer her a bit; but, bless me, instead of looking pleased, she turned awfully white, and those great eyes of her's flamed and flashed like red-hot coals. "Why! what's the row now?" I cry out, as she jumps off the saddle. But, without a word, back she goes to her van and keeps us all waiting, till I thought she wasn't coming at all. So I go and knock, but the door's fastened. "Don't be in a hurry. I'll come directly," she cries out; but I wait till she opens the door, and the first thing I see is a bottle on the table, and then one of her drawers open, with half the things turned out on the floor. "Well," she says, coolly, seeing me there. "Couldn't you wait a minute?" "No," I say. "They are nearly pulling the place down." "They will pull it down altogether soon," she mutters; "and I wish they would and bury him under it." "Bury who?" I ask. "Never mind," she says. "If you want me to ride to-night, let me pass." What was I to do?' he added, turning round to me. 'I couldn't make a fuss and not let her go on; and it's her benefit-night too. But what the devil she meant I don't know: only I wish Mr. Reginald wouldn't sit there, and I shall be mortal glad when she's safe back in her van; and that's the long and short of it.'

'I will tell Reginald to come here,' I said; and I went to the curtain to beckon to him across the ring.

There seemed little occasion for

Harman's alarm. The horse was going through his tricks as quietly as ever, and the girl appeared to be a little sharper with the curb—nothing more. She never looked at Reginald, who sat, as before, staring up at the canvas overhead, while the rest of the audience watched intently the movements of the horse and rider. Everything was so much as usual, that the scene, following Harman's story, was like waking up after a nightmare.

'Damnation! What is she doing now?' he exclaimed, pressing closer to me, so as to see better into the ring.

'Only a new trick,' I replied. I thought he was over-excited. 'She is bound to do something new on a benefit-night.'

It didn't look very dreadful. The performance with the stage was over, and, instead of letting the horse gallop round as usual, the girl was taking it straight across the ring, pulling it up when its head was almost over the low wood-work. It had a dashing effect and the audience applauded loudly.

'Yes, yes. But Ali won't understand it. Look! she is doing it again.'

Yes again, but she headed the horse straight for where Reginald was sitting. Its white body hid him from us, as it crossed the ring in a few strides. I felt Harman pressing to pass me, as the girl crouched upon the saddle, and, in the second, instead of seeing her check the horse, I caught the gleam of the lights upon a spur driven deep into the animal's side. A loud shout of horror rang in my ears, simultaneously with a heavy crash, as Ali, rearing wildly, sprang forward over the low wood-work, and fell full upon Reginald in a white, struggling heap.

Amid cries and shrieks we

dashed into the ring. I saw my cousin spring up and people rushing away from the spot. Others followed us and crowded round excitedly, with great oaths and hoarse voices. But, as we bent down, all the din seemed unheard. Among the broken and shattered benches was the dark robed figure of the girl, with upturned face and closed eyes, lying right under the body of the horse, with its great, heavy shoulder crushing upon her bosom.

An hour afterwards, I was sitting upon the steps of the black-painted van. Reginald had carried the girl there, and was now with her alone. The crowd, who followed him, had dwindled away when the doctor's report was known, though a few of them still remained, scattered about in small groups. It was not a night for loitering in the open air, but, despite the cold, three or four of the troupe lingered by the van. They were a scene for a painter as they stood in the moonlight, in their gay circus dresses, waiting there, because their companion was dying, and maybe because their hearts were heavy for the wayward beauty. But there was quietness at last, broken only by the low voice of the doctor, talking to Harman at the foot of the steps.

'Is there no hope, doctor?' I asked.

He shook his head. 'She can't live many minutes more, poor girl,' he said. 'She was fast sinking when I left her a quarter of an hour ago. I don't think that she is in much pain, at least, not acute pain. All the injuries are internal, and the organs are too numbed to be very sensitive. It's very dreadful—very dreadful. She ought not to have used that spur.'

Involuntarily I put my hand upon his arm. 'Hush.'

He looked at me eagerly. 'Do you really think she meant to do it?' he asked so low, that I could hardly hear him. 'She raved about it at first, but I paid no heed to that. It's awful to think of it, and she dying too. I wish we could get a clergyman to see her. But it is too late now—too late. Besides she isn't English, and, perhaps, she would not listen to him. Do you know what religion she holds?'

'No,' said Harman. 'I am afraid, Doctor, I and the troupe don't think as much about that as we ought.'

The old gentleman made a kind reply, and moved away from us into the shadow of the tent; and through the thick mist which rose into my eyes and blurred my sight, I saw him stand there, with his bald head uncovered and bent low upon his breast.

'George,' whispered a voice above me. 'George.' Reginald was standing at the van door, as I had seen the girl, six nights before, with her tears glistening in the moonlight. 'Don't wait for me. I'll come to you soon. Don't wait.' He closed the door, but his voice told me that the girl was dead. And motioning to the doctor that the end had come I hurried from the place.

IV.

It was a long watch that I kept for Reginald, sitting by my fire in the quiet barracks. My rooms were near the gate, and I heard the men return from Mrs. Cheshunt's *soirée*, generally in large parties at first, following each other at short intervals; but as the night wore on, now one alone, now two together came back; after them a few late stragglers from other places found their way home; and it was long again

after the last of these had passed my windows before I recognised Reginald's voice calling to the sentry. I went out and waited for him on the landing, to let him see that I had been watching for him. He came up the stairs with a slow, heavy step till he saw me, then muttering something about being very sorry to have kept me up, he passed into the room, wheeled the arm-chair round to the fire and sat down.

I said a few words—how dreadfully hard and hackneyed they sounded. I could not go, as a woman could, and kneel down by his side and coax the tears, by a gentle caress, into his bloodshot, burning eyes; so I sat in silence till he chose to speak. There was one thing I could do. It wanted but four minutes to five, and, pretending to search for something on the mantelshelf, I touched the stop in the side of the clock to prevent its striking. I thought the sound might jar upon his nerves. Eight hours before it had been the signal which warned us that it was time to go to the circus. I did not notice that he was watching me, and I sat down, hoping that he had not detected what I had done.

'Kindly meant, George,' he said however, with a slight smile; 'and there are other kindnesses, that I have heard of, that I shall not forget. She spoke to me about you, for—Eh! you look surprised, and, perhaps, think you have done nothing. It was like stopping that clock. From what she said, I know you have been as courteous to her, as if you had met her in the position she ought to have held; and I feel it the more because it—it was to my wife.'

'To your wife! Reginald.'

'To my wife,' he repeated, turning full upon me. 'Think of

me what you like. I have been a fool and a coward, and now I have to bear the punishment.' He spoke very bitterly in his grief, and moved abruptly round again towards the fire. Then he asked in a quieter voice, but still looking at the coals:

'Did you see it?'

'Yes.'

'All?'

'Yes.'

'How it happened?' and I nodded.

He seemed to read my thoughts. 'Does anybody else know that——?' He stopped abruptly; he could not bring himself to criminate his wife in formal words.

'Only Harman and the doctor, I fancy, Reginald.' And as I spoke, he drew a long, shuddering breath and leant back in his chair. A sharp spasm of pain passed over his face, as if he had been struck, and then he murmured so low that I had to bend forward to catch the words.

'It was my fault—my fault. He told her that our marriage was a sham and she believed him. He preyed upon her outraged feelings till he drove her wild, and then he tried to tempt her, and she fled from him. Baffled he spread reports about her that were caught up and magnified. Men came to me and told me tales about her. They meant well, no doubt. They did not know that she was my wife. I began to believe that the letter was a sham, and that it was only an excuse for her leaving me. I couldn't find her. I couldn't find him. I heard that she had gone off with him, and I cursed them both; and now both are dead. He died with the lies he told to her and about her hot in his mouth; for they were lies—all lies, and this is the end of them. O God! and what an end.'

Kind nature came to his relief at last. His set, white features unbent, and great tears welled up into his dry, bloodshot eyes, as he covered his face with his hands. Without speaking, I put my arm round him and led him into my other room. I almost lifted him on to the bed, threw a rug over him, closed the door, and left him alone.

It was an anxious week that followed the last night of the circus at Helstonleigh. Reginald went away the next day to avoid being present at the inquest; and, early the same morning, Harman sent the circus and troupe to another town. 'Tell me nothing now,' he said, 'and I shall know nothing. It will be best for all.' He and the doctor were summoned, but the newspapers befriended us; the jurors had no suspicion and found, unanimously, that it was an accident and poor Ali alone to blame.

'Best so. Best so,' muttered Harman. 'It won't hurt him, poor brute. His hurts won't heal the less soon, or his corn taste less sweet. He'll have to be idle and grow fat, now Mamzell's left us. He'll miss her as much as any of us, although we were all very fond of the girl.'

But before the week had passed, there was placards posted up in another town, announcing the coming of the 'unrivalled circus,' only 'La Haute École' was omitted from the programme. And far away from Helstonleigh, Reginald, Harman, and I stood by, while the fair rider was laid to rest, under the shadow of the village-church, where she was married. It was her last wish to lie there. And a cross, bearing her true name, 'Marie, the wife of Captain Fordyce,' throws its shadow, when the sun is setting, over her grave.

A. V. H.





P L E A S U R E.

'Pleasures are ever in our hands or eyes,
And when in act they cease in prospect rise;
Present to grasp, or future still to find,
The whole employ of body and of mind.'

WHAT is pleasure? Absence of pain, philosophers have answered, with irritating brevity. A negative reply most truly, inspiring regret we had not followed the example of 'Jesting Pilate,' and turned away as the question left our lips. In one sense, certainly—freedom from pain or trouble—its mental representative—does afford very decided pleasure, and illustrates a fact indisputable, that living is rendered on the whole happy by a succession of contrasts more or less marked; better fitted for satisfying man's restless soul than an even tenour of content or a paradise of monotony.

'The web of our life is of a mingled
yarn,
Good and ill together.'

With the absence of bodily pain the mind remains in a comfortable *dolce far niente* condition. Every one who has battled through a perilous illness, and retraced his steps from the gloomy valley which lies at the end of life's journey, can bear witness to the calm, subtle joys attending what is for the body almost a *vita nuova*. With firmer hand we each day grasp again at life's myriad sweets—the delights of Nature and man's skill: are again children, to prize the merest trifles which years of custom have made stale and tasteless. Poets have not deemed it beneath their dignity to sing the simple pleasures of convalescence—that half-shuddering happiness at having foiled the pale king this bout, at least: the hearty smiles

and hand-shakes of those nearest and dearest, and—last though not least—that wondrous appetite, transforming the hackneyed chop into a dinner for the gods!

Man, undeniably, is a pleasure-seeking animal. He ceases to be so only when he has lapsed into a chronic state of morbidity. Before we can crawl, our godfathers and godmothers hasten to provide us with resplendent coral and silver, much more to gratify our craving eye and ear, than to aid in cutting our troublesome ivories. So soon as we stumble tipsily along to the horror of the nervous bystander, some cherished toy or doll must needs relieve the *ennui* of our constitutional with nurse; and there is nothing over which tiny toddlers are so ready to fight à outrance as over the staple of their mimic pleasures.

Work is indubitably an acquired taste, like that for claret or olives—a taste enforced by the rod which has flagellated mankind ever since fair Eve's curiosity made her long posterity 'hewers of wood and drawers of water.' Reason had to give us a lift and persuade us to accept toil mental or mechanical, if not willingly, at least quietly, as inevitable, whilst Dame Nature with her beauteous system of compensations teaches us that work a thousandfold enhances our pleasures.

Of what does pleasure consist? Primarily of *absorption*. Such is the bliss of lovers, those gluttons of pleasure (so far as their path runs smooth, poor voyagers!), the entrancing delights of the mazy

waltz, charmed wanderings in the boundless realms of fiction, or the intellectual tournament of chess. Though unquestionably there is, despite all our groaning 'Jeremiahs,' much more pleasure than pain in the world, there is yet portioned out, and often somewhat unfairly, a pretty fund of annoyances, vexations, discomforts, and monotones, which render the *getting out of ourselves* for awhile, far from disagreeable, and decidedly beneficial. Pleasure allures us from the often gloomy prison of *self*, and as usually we are compelled to companionship in its pursuit, enforces the wisdom of co-operation (that hated word which is as a red-rag unto the irate tradesman!).

Man was never cut out for a solitary life—as Monsieur Crusoe found to his cost. What did his abandonment of civilized life entail on the irrepressible Claimant? Loss of his mother tongue, and the fat acres of Tichborne—what an awful example of the error of turning rusty, and bolting from the busy haunts of man! Poor Roger might better have drunk pots of ale in the congenial butler's pantry, and waiting for the day of inheritance, ten to one have been amply consoled for that cruel interruption of his 'Love's young dream.' Crusoe, instead of a 'Life on the ocean wave,' only arrived at living high and dry mid the solitude and alarms of a bit of land smaller than a large English county, to which he was chained—a Promethean-warehouseman in mid-ocean, when he could have spent a jolly time of it in Old England, and enjoyed the reputation of a dutiful son.

Votaries of pleasure may be divided into two classes—those who are *ready* to enjoy, and those who require coaxing. An important desideratum in the pleasure-seeker is that he shall be content with

himself, as a lucky merchant whose balance is on the right side. That given, we have a sure basis for rearing the transient fabric of the swift-running hours,—possess a *passé-partout* with which to sally out into the world's fancy fair, and frolic at its thousand pretty stalls. Alas! few are qualified by fortune and disposition to be thus easily wooed and won by the attractive goddess. Except perhaps midst a group of laughing children, something of the skeleton at the feast, shadows assembled pleasure-seekers, a light cloud of internal depression, confessed in the innermost hearts of the smiling multitude that ebb and flow in the glowing booths of Vanity Fair.

Who guessed, for instance, at the acute agonies of poor Major Pendennis when staying out the stately ball, at which the stern dictates of fashion and 'Pen's' interests said, 'Wait?' He pined, an ancient wreck, in the grey-morning's light for relief from tight boots, stays, and wig, for the downy couch which had long expected its gouty tenant. Fortunately our hearts are not free to public gaze. Were it not so many a high revel would be changed to a gloomy 'Hall of Eblis,' and the revellers shun each other's burning bosoms in awful silence.

Touching the assertion that 'forbidden pleasures are sweetest.' They are so to a certain and limited extent only. As Gray beautifully puts it, we can only '*Snatch a fearful joy*;' and the forbidden fruit is thoroughly relished only, when our appetite is artificially strengthened by a tonic leaven of evil. Cinderella would rather, we opine, have gone to the grand ball in the manner of ordinary mortals. However that entrancing legend may run, we can't feel certain that the fairy godmother could quite banish from her *protégée's* mind a

tiny cloud of distrust as to what might ensue 'after the opera was over.' Children are generally, and rather unfairly, credited, with lusting after forbidden fruit, and savouring it much more than sanctioned *pabulum*. In reality they are but undamped by care, conscience, or reflection, while at the flesh-pots, which, we big-folks may not feast upon so undisturbedly. We have no intention of discussing the perplexed question what are harmless and lawful, or vicious and unlawful pleasures, but can fearlessly assert that by far the larger amount of current pleasure is wholly of an innocent character.

'What is one man's food is another man's poison,' and the proverb is constantly illustrated for us. There is the life-long pleasure of the bibliomaniac, the bon-vivant, the art-collector and antiquarian—*et hoc genus omne*. To each of these, the delights and enthusiasm of his neighbour are a profound mystery, ignored or openly scorned. Intellectual recreations hold a high place in the syren mazes of pleasure-land, though poisoned with some latent alloy. May not the crowned glories of the past from their Olympian pinnacles suggest disagreeable contrasts to ordinarily-endowed Brown and Jones, as they sun or singe themselves in the dazzling light, with a vain hope of stealing a thimbleful of 'Promethean fire'?

The 'De Stæel' defined pleasure as a sense of progress in any work pursued *con amore*, anticipating the 'still achieving, still pursuing' of Longfellow, and Carlyle's apotheosis of labour. But to many, or most minds, there is little association between the word *pleasure*, and the cumulative delights of mastering a foreign tongue, or slowly raising a great monument of persevering genius, be it a history like 'Gibbon's' or a beacon

such as Eddystone, and a wonder that the toil should arouse or thrill any nerve of pleasure.

But the pleasures of Society! What a glowing vista rises before the *débutant*! A many-tinted *mélange*—a stage set up with all the wondrous tricks of art and custom, best calculated to witch the senses, and cast a glamour over the votary's soul. Our ever conscious, and all-pervading *individuality*, infuses a subtle charm into our anticipations of joys to come in that thronged and glittering arena. We won't for a moment (or perhaps rather by nature we *can't*) regard ourselves as pawns on a chess-board, boasting only the same tether and capacities of moving, as vouchsafed to our long ancestry from poor misguided 'Adam.' The sixty-four squares represent the formalities and exactions of society, on which lines we must be content to travel—ay, and move adroitly to keep our own, much more to win prizes. This irrepressible individuality, or self-assertion, suffers the very deuce, and plays awkward tricks enough when depressed. 'Hesperides' may be thrown open to a crowd of the upper-ten, and prove but a poor sort of place after all, if a majority of the guests be bilious or under the nameless horrors of influenza. Our charming hostess may summon witching beauty, *esprit*, and fashion to her sparkling *salon*, to meet cruel failure, if a majority of her guests are a prey to the blues: for disposition, bile, and catarrh, weigh more than lights, gilding, and fine company. Fair May and charming Laura protest 'gainst the infinite weariness of Mrs. Dashaway's dance, while brother Charley is in raptures over the exceeding jolliness of the evening. Only because the latter has been in the humour for a long and happy flirtation, whilst May and Laura, at sixes-

and-sevens with themselves, grossly exaggerated any demerits in their respective partners. What is the moral? Simply, we must cultivate ourselves to be recipients of pleasure, and not, like sulky children, turn obstinately away from what, with a little exertion on our side, can soon be developed into genuine amusement.

There is one pleasure which rarely deserts us, our first and firmest friend—the last to leave us with a sigh. Who can recount or sing the pleasures of *Hope*? That fairy gift which failed to quit beauteous Pandora's treasure-box of plagues. Before the straining ship goes down, but only when the waves rush in beyond the resisting power of pumps and seams, we may see the rats desert their dark stronghold. So when all is over with poor mortality, our cheering Ariel—Hope flies away to less troubled regions. Hope, or anticipation, forms a piquant sauce for joys to come; so good, indeed, that it often pales reality, and make us wish again for the season of expectation.

'All things that are,
Are with more spirit chased than enjoyed.'

Old age has its pleasures too, though they are principally of a negative order. Then monotony and quiet (youth's bugbears), and a knowledge that things have been wound up and are going undisturbedly, constitute the *summum bonum* of content. To budding miss and jubilant young Hopeful, old age presents nothing but a vague icy prospect—is indissolubly associated with torpor, wrinkles, death, and irksome precepts. Nature smiles at the cunning elixir Time is ever preparing in his wondrous laboratory for both internal and external application. Holbein's 'Dance of Death' has no truer or more beautiful illustration than that of the terrible despot gently leading the aged man to his grave. It has been said that old people clutch at life more eagerly than the young. Nature is too strong and kind for this to be true but in very exceptional cases. As a rule the good dame softly lessens the flame of life, and slowly breaks our mundane ties in a variety of ways, so that the end may come as a pleasant sleep, rather than by a wrench and a tug from this little spot of assured *terra firma*.



CURRICULUM OXONIENSE.

A RHYME OF ALMA MATER.

CRAMMED to the brim with Eton's classic lore,
 Wise saws of sages, poets' dreams of yore,
 A 'swell' to turn yon Latin periods neat, or
 E'en a 'Times' leader in Iambic metre—
 Safe in his grasp (of course) Fame's fairest prize,
 The bumptious Freshman up to Oxford hies :
 His the stern vow, by reading close and deep,
 To scale at length High Honour's topmost steep.
 So, mid quaint scenes of school and holiday,
 The curtain rises, and begins the Play.

* * * *

He dons the gown, the cap, with matchless grace,
 Sure he to win the Academic race,
 A 'double first,' at least, within his ken,—
 Failure but fastens on your shady men.
 A little space, the midnight lamp illumines
 The studious calm of his well-ordered rooms ;
 A little space, historian, poet, sage,
 Fire all his thoughts, and all his powers engage—
 Peace his by day, by night untroubled rest,
 No Hebrew threatens, no rude duns molest :
 So his first term glides smoothly to its end,
 And home he flies the pleasant 'vac.' to spend.
 But soon, next term, dread sign of direful change !
 Rumour is rife with whispers new and strange.
 For him at morn in vain the Chapel bell
 Angrily 'swears,'—the sad Muse weeps to tell,
 He snores supine, of time unconscious quite,
 After a champagne-supper overnight :
 Rising at length, he scorns the sacred dons,
 And, Lectures cut, breakfasts with Brown at John's.
 See ye that dashing tandem rolling by ?
 Hear ye those shouts that fill the midday sky ?
 'Tis he, the Freshman erst,—but on his brow
 'Twere vain to seek 'Thought's pale complexion' now ;
 More of late 'feeds' it hints, and heavy wines,
 And feet not bedwards turn'd till morning shines.
 Strange coats he wears, and shirts of curious dye,
 And jewels purchas'd in the 'Corn' or 'High':—
 Purchas'd ?—but well each soapy tradesman knows
 No wish to hint of cash for gems or clothes,—

'Proud of your custom. Pray, sir, take your pick'
 (And e'en his watch proclaims the time 'on tick!')
 O happy state, thinks he ; O, blissful dream,
 Thus to disport through groves of Acadème!

* * * * *

Again Time's curtain rises to the view,
 And shows our quondam Freshman's face anew.
 What ghastly terror pales his visage so?
 Grisliest of Fiends, avaunt! thou dread Great-Go!
 At length the awful day, despised too long,
 Dawns with its crowd of fears, a gloomy throng;
 Within the Schools, most dismal spot, he sits,
 Biting his nails, racking his brains by fits:
 Before him baleful Logic's paper lies,
 Relentless, stern; he shuns it with his eyes—
 For hath not Aldrich woo'd, and woo'd in vain,
 This errant son to follow in his train!
 'Barb'ra, Celarent,' rise in silent power,
 Spectres that gibe and sneer in that fierce hour.
 At length 'tis o'er: 'tis only left to wait
 The dread 'Testamur,' big with secret fate.
 Here are they—here is Brown—and Jones—but, hold!
 Where's Robinson? and Echo answers, Sold!

* * * * *

Years pass; the scene is chang'd:—In a new land,
 Girt by great seas, with towering mountains grand,
 May'st see our hero, lone as lone can be,
 Smoking the herb Nicotian 'neath a tree.
 Around him miles of rolling plain he views,
 Where no grim dun the unwary victim sues:
 No need to sport the oak—is heard no sound
 Save the quick-biting sheep that feed around.

* * * * *

And so the Drama ends.

'A Reverend Dean,'
 Quoth he, 'or Bishop, p'raps, I *might* have been,
 'A Shepherd in a very different sphere,
 Instead of which I—keep a sheepwalk here.'

J. W. TAYLOR.



ENGLISH HOTEL LIFE.

THERE is nowhere where you can be more thoroughly at home than at an inn. It generally takes me twenty-four hours to work off the sensation of freshness and novelty, but after that I enjoy myself thoroughly. 'Shall I not take mine ease at my inn?' is a thoroughly-English proverb. Dr. Johnson was a great admirer of inns. He preferred tavern life to any other: 'Believe me, sir, the finest prospect is improved by a good inn in the background.' There was good Archbishop Leighton who always desired to die at an inn: and he had his wish—and his life and his money were exactly commensurate. There is one very simple reason that accounts for the superiority of inns. At your own house or at any other house, the less trouble you give, so much the better; but at an hotel you can hardly give too much trouble: you cannot ask for too great a number of things. Business is all the brisker for your orders. The hotel system in England has not attained the vast development which has been the case in America: and, for the sake of every home influence, I sincerely trust it never may; but that there has been a wonderful alteration of late years every one who has had occasion to travel through all parts of the country, knows very well.

It is a noticeable phase of English society, that an increasing number of persons live regularly at hotels. This is an approximation to the American system. The hotels willingly receive such. Some will make extremely ample reductions, to permanent customers: but of course they prefer those guests who do not ask for, and would not accept, any concession. There is

an amusing story, told by Mr. Smiles, in one of his 'Lives of Engineers.' A great engineer had resided so long at one of the hotels near Charing Cross, that he was regarded as one of the fixtures. He horrified a new landlord by telling him that he was going away. The poor man explained that he had bought and paid for him only a few weeks before, and that he had paid several hundred pounds for the lease and good-will of the permanent inmate. People who have had the misfortune to outlive their friends and relations, often live permanently at hotels, finding it tolerably cheap, and much more cheerful. They hardly live at one hotel all the year long but they flit, according to the season, from one hotel to another. It is not unusual, in these wealthy days, to find whole families, with servants and governesses, locating themselves for weeks together at an hotel. Nowhere more than in Yorkshaire, is there so much money spent, or the style of living so frank, free, and unembarrassed. It is only of late years that vast hotels have become the fashion in London. The Grosvenor, the Charing Cross, the Langham have quite revolutionized hotel life in London. Most of the old hotels have furnished up and endeavoured to meet the modern standard. The great motive cause was probably the Limited Liability Act, which, both for good and evil, has immensely modified the character of English commercial transactions. The wide prospect was thereby opened to the general public of realizing the tradesman's profits with something decidedly less than the tradesman's responsibilities. Innkeeping was supposed to

be a peculiarly prosperous business yielding immense returns. It became a famous investment, and limited-liability hotels arose on every side. Clergymen, country gentlemen, and spinster ladies, all became innkeepers, so far as the taking of shares could make them such. But it soon became evident that you could not have the tradesman's profits, unless you also had his constant assiduity and keen interest in his daily takings. The new hotels were generally built in a very complete manner and were most gorgeously furnished. But somehow they did not succeed as they might have been expected to succeed. There was an air of listlessness about them. The very servants seemed to know that the manager's eyes, unquickened by the intense responsibility of a personal venture, had not its wonted terror and command. Some properties became heavily mortgaged, and some altogether came to sorrow. I have known of hotels being sold, the furniture of some rooms of which had never been used, with almost miles of sheetings and blanketings untouched. Of late the system has been to employ some manager of great experience, and who will take a large interest in the undertaking. The general business has been firmer and healthier; but still the non-paying hotels are not infrequent, and those are thought exceedingly good which show a profit of seven or eight per cent. It will be seen, therefore, that, although the charges of great hotels are high, it would be difficult to make a reduction. Of course there are some hotels where you must pay anything you are asked: 'Luncheon, sir, four shillings, a potato, sixpence, water-cress sixpence'—the cumulative style which German hotel-keepers often practice upon the tourist. If you come to the

conclusion that you don't like the wine of an hotel, and prefer to take your own, the charge is two shillings a cork. Some hotels are not happy in their wines. There are no wine committees, as at clubs, and they are perhaps selected by a single vicious taste. At such a place as Brighton you may be charged pretty much as you like. People go there when they have plenty of money and with the express design of getting rid of it. The Grand Hotel at Brighton is more like a caravanserai than any other place where I have stayed, and it has certainly not superseded the Bedford of old. In Paris, I am glad to say that the tariffs both of the Louvre and of the Grand Hotel are reduced. One advantage of a great hotel is that you may calculate to a sixpence what you have to pay; and if you go on the boarding system, increasing in the hotels, you need only be provided with a specified number of guineas.

'But worse it were than death or idiot's
glance
To be without a sou within these
walls.'

Tariffs are everywhere attainable, and it depends only on yourself where you will take up your abode and how long you will stay.

Let us look a little at the working of great hotels in their practical details. The commissariat of a great hotel must be a very serious matter. The provisioning of the Grand Hotel on the Boulevard des Italiens must involve very curious statistics. In such large undertakings there is always a risk that peculation and waste will run away with the profits. A professed cook will take his hundred a year and drink his fourteen pints of beer daily. The management does not so much find fault with this: for you cannot stint people of beer who are exposed to great fires, but

the extravagance that can be perpetuated in such establishments is immense. The system of letting off apartments, the tenants of which keep their own keys and feed where they like, has taken no hold of English hotels. You cannot sleep at an English hotel, under three-half-crowns, which represent bed, attendance, and breakfast. But then the solitude of the Grand Hotel can be immense, because the crowd is immense. The court-yard of the Langham only feebly reproduces the court-yard of the Grand. There is a legend, that in one of the streets—as the great corridors of the Grand are named—a man died and was not found for a week afterwards. Then the administration is necessarily carried on by a system of checks, which is indeed the only method possible. Perhaps you are sometimes surprised at the delay in attending to a simple order. But that order has been booked—perhaps re-booked—and tickets and counterfoils interchanged before that glass of wine is issued. The mere management of such a business, in the treasury, offices, etc., involves enormous work, and could only be conducted by almost military discipline and subdivision of labour.

One of the most important officials in an hotel is the head-waiter. Dickens, in his 'Mutual Friend,' in that incomparable marriage dinner at Greenwich, makes the head-waiter Archbishop. If he had said Archdeacon, he would have given the precise meaning of the word head-waiter. This functionary is immensely important. I knew a head-waiter who had a stipend of three hundred a-year; this is somewhat above the average, but the head-waiter of a great hotel has at least half that stipend. Then their chance fees are very considerable. They have sometimes most persuasive manners. Old

ladies abandon themselves to their care with the most relying *abandon*. An *habitué* of an hotel generally gives a weekly 'tip' to the head-waiter and he generally knows what he is about. The head-waiter is nearly always English, but a large proportion of the under-waiters are foreign—French, Italian, and German. That great servant-difficulty crops up at the hotels, and it is thought best to import the waiters. As a rule, they fare as well as the most lucrative guest in the house: an early dinner and an excellent supper. 'The best and simplest plan,' said a gentleman to me, the other day, 'is to give your servants salmon, lamb, new peas, and early potatoes. Then they don't waste, as they know the value; otherwise they are most wasteful.' Some waiters have quite a cosmopolitan reputation: they are known in Switzerland, France, and England. Some will ply a trade during half the year and go into business for the other half. I have sometimes received pantomimic gestures from waiters who wished to convey the impression that they had met me in far-away localities. Then there is the elderly domestic, like the chambermaid in the 'Vision of Sin,' who prides herself upon her severe aspect and irreproachable character, and who declines, from ethical motives, to bring your hot water into the bed-room, causing you to shiver in the breeze as you make a surreptitious dash for it. The vexed question of fees to servants is constantly recurring. When you have paid for attendance, it is rather hard to pay over again: yet you naturally want to give something to people who have been civil to you, especially if you are told—as you sometimes are—that they receive no money payment. I think a small gratuity is due to the servants with whom you have been chiefly brought in contact, espe-

dially, if you feel that you have really been done well by.

There are some large hotels which of late years have been dropped down in romantic sites where you can study bits of scenery and phases of society with peculiar facility. As a rule, you do not see much of either in a great city. There is one exception, which is, that at the Langham or the Louvre you will be sure to find American families staying on indefinitely; and, if you think it worth while, you can get together a large American connection. The idea of putting down large hotels in beautiful localities, where families may stay for weeks together and the neighbourhood may yield them constant enjoyment, is an admirable one: it is importing into the country just as much of London as you care for. A bachelor has all the comforts of his club, with an agreeable admixture of ladies' society. It is true that the drawing-room, in some places, is nominally reserved only for those gentlemen who are accompanied by ladies, but the rule is not *de rigueur*, and you soon find some kind people who will take you under their wing. The English taste for insulation will cause many people to coop themselves up in private rooms, and not to avail themselves of the spacious public rooms. Generally, however, people muster to the *table d'hôte*, apparently under the conviction that it is the best dinner to be had in a house. The English *table d'hôte*, however, has not arrived at the perfection of those abroad. The institution is not yet fully assimilated to the English genius. Though the courses are fewer the time is longer—a *table d'hôte* ought to be just one hour long—and the prolongation is due to a delay between the courses which sometimes renders the viands cold.

On former occasions we have spoken in this magazine of grand hotels abroad, and such as those of Scarborough and Aberystwith, in our own country, have been discussed. Let us take some in the fair Western country. Clifton is not a bad place to stay at, and the Down Hotel is a familiar example of what a grand hotel may be. Clifton is to Bristol very much what the parks and their neighbourhood are to the City. The Suspension-bridge is a triumph of engineering skill; the Leigh woods are beautiful to behold, though you dread the effect of the introduction of numerous villas among their shades; the Clifton and Durdham downs are freely swept by Atlantic breezes when the wind is from the west. The contrast with Bristol is very striking and suggestive. The Bristolians have always been a somewhat lawless set; Mr. Freeman tells us in his last volume how in the Conqueror's time a holy monk went down to Bristol to preach against the Slave Trade. And the Slave Trade kept up its connection with Bristol to the last. But there is something infinitely picturesque in those narrow, crowded, overhanging streets; in the recollection of Chatterton's muse and Burke's orations; in the twin cathedrals; for St. Mary Redcliffe's surely deserves that title. The Down scenery is limited, but when you prolong your walk or ride to the point above Shirehampton, take the railways that run on either side of the river, and work your way up the Severn and down the Bristol Channel, and you find you are in the centre of a rich district which well deserves to be worked. Then you have the pictures at Leigh Court and George Müller's orphan schools at Ashley Down.

Very pleasant is it to get back

to the spacious reception-rooms of the Down Hotel, and find all creature wants carefully attended to. At Plymouth, Falmouth, Torquay, Westward Ho, there are famous hotels, but in the Western peninsula there is none that I like better than that at Ilfracombe. It is a pleasant halting-place if you are working your way between the two great moors of Devonshire, Dartmoor and Exmoor. I know of no district more abounding with all objects of interest than that of Ilfracombe. I remember staying at the hotel the first week it was inaugurated, when I was almost the only denizen of the palatial pile, and took a very morbid view of the whole concern, despite the comfort and excellence of its arrangements. But I have since heard that it has been twice enlarged, and when the new railway is opened it must again overflow its limits.

Hotel life is certainly luxurious and lazy. The first thing to impress upon servants is that they are on no account to call you in the morning. People have no right to force upon people the pestilent habit of early rising. You saunter into the coffee-room between nine and ten, and find your letters and newspapers ranged at your table. This is much better than a porter banging you up at half-past eight to give you your letters. You soon appropriate a table. Going into an hotel the other day, I was politely requested to yield the place I had taken, as it belonged to a gentleman who had occupied it for the last five years. Then take your strolls in the garden, or on the beach, and you must be of morose disposition if you do not gather up some pleasant words and looks whereby to ensweeten the sweet air. Then the gay children of pleasure plot and plan for the summer day.

Sometimes, as I look at such pleasant scenes, and mentally contrast scenes of poverty and struggle, I am reminded of the ladies of the 'Decameron' who sought refuge from the plague in those fair villas outside Florence. If you are a busy man, you have briefs to read or articles to write; should it be a fine day you will have the common room for reading or writing all to yourself; or, if it is rainy, unless you have a genius for concentration, you will have to retreat to your own apartment. But have as little to do with work as you possibly can while you are sojourning in these luxurious summer palaces. But don't be an indolent man, depending for your resources on what society you can pick up. The charms of society are exaggerated; it is all very well in its way, but one ought to be able to enjoy solitude; and at any new place a certain amount of solitude is to be gone through before there can be any real enjoyment of society. Give up your work, or keep it till the rainy weather, but boat, sketch, philosophize, botanize, pedestrianize. Never think unkindly of any companionship, but be courteous to all, looking upon each nature as a new book to be opened and perused. Nothing is pleasanter than gliding into companionship and intimacy. Some persons are reluctant to contract a new friendship when on the face of things the intimacy must soon terminate. As a rule, residents in watering-places are very slow to call upon visitants, because the visitants will so soon have fled. This is a very narrow and one-sided way of looking at things. A good is none the less so because it is brief, and then these broken links may often be resumed. It is a capital thing to have your six or nine hours in the open air,

inhaling the oxygen and iodine, with an *al fresco* lunch. Lord Palmerston said that a man, to be in perfect health, ought to be in the open air four hours a day; and as on many days a man fails to count as much as this he must restore the average. I delight to wander at my own sweet will across an unknown country, and when I come to some pretty elm-shaded village, such as an English artist loves, and on which any English eye would love to dwell, then I rest and read and saunter until the advancing shadows remind me of retreat. Then comes the *table d'hôte*; and I like, for my own part, to sit next some travelled veteran who is not unwilling to impart his experience to me, or some business man who is resting on his oars, having worked hard for years, and who, looking at all questions of the day from experience and from a practical point of view, can be instructive enough, though perhaps a little one-sided. It is the advantage of a prolonged dinner that it admits conversation, and it is the advantage of the dinner-hour that it disposes men to be genial and conversant. And after a honest day's work or play that rest comes very pleasantly; very pleasant to have music and light and strolls beneath the moonlight or the wave-beat shore. You will always find men to talk to in the billiard or smoking rooms, but you must not let the converse interfere with what I call the *toning down* process of the evening hours. You will find men who will sit up to unheard of hours in their sitting-rooms, and sometimes meet them going to their beds as the very early birds are preparing for a plunge before breakfast. But the wise

plan is to tone down gently, lay aside work, avoid the exciting and emotional, read easy books and write easy letters, so that sleep courteously woo'd may gently come, and make you full of *feel* the next day, as Windham used to say. I imagine that this may sound a little epicurean, but the great thing is the maintenance of the *Mens sana in corpore sano*.

In this hotel life you come across many confidences and intimacies. Often you find an undertone of sadness and ill health where expense seems most unspared and enjoyment most free. That pale-faced man is only just now recovering from a severe illness that I am afraid will never entirely release its grasp. That group of slender girls in half-mourning have had a terrible domestic calamity. That young clergyman has been sent down by his parishioners, who have clubbed together a purse. Then there are business men who are snatching a few days from business, and barristers who are carving a slight holiday out of circuit. Most are holiday people who, according to the wise modern fashion, are securing a rest and breaking time in the year. They will soon make up lost ground with freshened wits and quickened energy. I do not underrate foreign travel, but I love home scenery; I do not dislike the old-fashioned inn, of which I might say many kindly words, but the grand hotels of cities sum up all the conveniences and luxuries of modern life, and those which are established in our great health resorts have peculiar social points of interest which render a prolonged stay there an agreeable interlude to a working and over-worked man.

F. A.

A LEAP IN THE DARK.

CHAPTER V.

THE REUNION.

THE croquet party seemed to open a new era in Richard Anstruther's life; from that time he and Miss Mackenzie never passed a day without meeting. The old life seemed shut out completely from his view; he did not care to look far beyond Kathleen's face. The place where they more frequently met, however, was in the hay-fields, in the cool of the July evenings. They sauntered among the sweet-smelling new-mown hay, and climbed to the top of the Dyke Hill, Kathleen's favourite spot, to watch the sunset, and lingered there often till the bright colour died out of the deserted skies; then they sauntered slowly back, chatting pleasantly if not gaily, she flavouring the conversation with the sauce piquante, which gave him such a relish for her society. Sometimes, by some natural process, they found themselves linked hand in hand, as they walked on through the pleasant lanes under the darkening skies, without uttering a word.

Anstruther began to think he must take a last look on his 'fool's paradise,' and begone; and yet he could not bear to think of it, partly for her sake, partly for his own; he was vain enough to fancy she would miss their *tête-à-tête* rambles, and the idea of her wandering *tête-à-tête* with anybody else, was gall and wormwood to him. He often speculated and wondered what she would say, how she would look when he

should tell her they must say, 'Good-bye.' For both their sakes, he felt that if it were to be said at all, it must be said soon. He had met and parted with many women before now, and forgotten them, but part when and how they might, he felt that this one would never be forgotten. Meanwhile, as everything must be bought with a price, their arcadian felicity stirred the breath of scandal, and Mrs. Grundy appeared upon the scene, having a special rod in pickle for Miss Mackenzie; but she hesitated to lay it on that young lady's delicate shoulders, till Mr. Anstruther had left the field of action—knowing that he would gird on sword and buckler in her defence, and rout their forces utterly. The Grundynians have more than once used their unseen weapons too mercilessly, and been defeated in the face of a bold unconventional truth, and have slunk away on the dark side of the world for a time, but only to re-appear again with arms brightened and burnished, and darts envenomed ready to maul and mangle the fairest reputation. Miss Mackenzie had certainly given Mrs. Grundy a handle for her slanderous weapon, she knew well enough that evil things were said behind her back, but she did not care, she took no means to stop them, being ignorant of the poisonous effect of gossiping tongues; she looked loftily forward and went on her way. The young lady was by no means blind to the

general impropriety of their ways, she held many a mental argument upon the subject, and argued herself into the admission that though theoretically it might be a little wrong, practically it was a great delight. After all, what had society done for her, that she should immolate herself on its altar? Suppose she denied herself the pleasure of seeing him, and turned her back upon him after the fashion of the most severe propriety, what would society give her in return for her self-denial?—nothing. She knew well enough that no thing lives for ever, that the delicious hours and days were passing away, and would soon be gone—no matter—so long as they lasted, she would enjoy them to the uttermost. Few persons, even those who are wiser and stronger than Miss Mackenzie, would have the courage to put a brimming cup untasted from their thirsty lips, because it would be empty, and they would be again thirsty on the morrow. Of course Mr. Anstruther would go away some day, and she must go back to her own lonely life. Well, sufficient for the day was the evil thereof, so 'Vive la Bagatelle!' In this mood she threw on her hat, and wandered out into the golden cornfields, knowing well enough that a grey wide-awake would be watching for her, on some elevated spot in the remote distance, and that a pair of long legs would come vaulting over a stile and bring their owner to her side. Of course she was always surprised to see him, and he never expected to see her, but was delighted nevertheless. They acted the farce so often, till at last they began to believe in these accidental meetings.

One evening as they were enjoying their ramble across the fields, amusing themselves in their

own fashion, they chanced to look ahead, and to their mutual dismay, beheld Mrs. Woollaston and the two Miss Foresters bearing down upon them. Mr. Anstruther was the first to discover them—he stopped short.

'Kathleen,' he said, 'they've not seen you—run back!'

'Why,' she exclaimed, 'why should I run back as though I were ashamed of myself, and they had a right to rebuke me? I don't see any great crime in walking across the fields with you.' She held up her small head, looked a little vexed and flurried, and walked defiantly on. 'I'd better say good-bye at once,' she added; 'of course you'll walk back with them!'

'Of course,' he answered, drily; 'Miss Forester is a temptation which I may not have the courage to withstand—and, Kathleen,' he added, quickly, 'I would rather have met a mad bull than these women; I could take that by the horns and shield you from it; but I cannot shield you from their confounded tongues—a woman's tongue is a weapon a man is utterly powerless against.'

By this time the two parties had approached very near, they met, Mr. Anstruther raised his hat to his hostess and her friends, as he would have done to any ordinary acquaintance. They acknowledged his politeness with the most freezingly cold courtesy, as though they resented it, and passed on.

'Well!' exclaimed Miss Forester, when they were out of hearing. 'What a state of demoralization the world is coming to! The idea of walking about with a person of that description, and passing us without a word, dear Mrs. Woollaston; and you are such friends, too!' Mrs. Woollaston sighed plaintively, and said

that 'Miss Mackenzie was a scandal to the Manor, and her goings on ought to be put a stop to; as for poor dear Mr. Anstruther, he was only too easily led astray.' So they walked on bemoaning.

'They'll never forgive me for this,' exclaimed Kathleen, as soon as they were a few yards ahead. 'Did you see Miss Forester's face? If looks could kill, I should be lying dead at your feet this moment; but I think you had better have turned back with them.'

'We don't always do what is better or best,' he answered; 'we sometimes choose what is pleasantest instead.'

From that moment Miss Mackenzie's reputation was a doomed thing. She soon became aware that things were going wrong somewhere. She was summoned one morning to the Rectory, and seriously lectured as a sheep that had gone astray, and refused to be gathered into the fold again. She would not call herself a miserable sinner, confess, repent, and be forgiven; on the contrary, she held her head rather high, and disclaimed to plead 'extenuating circumstances' for her wicked ways.

One word led to another, and that evening when she went to keep her *accidental* tryst with Dick Anstruther, she carried her dismissal and a quarter's salary in her pocket; but she never told him how things had fallen out, lest he should blame himself as being in part the cause. That evening she was in unusually good spirits, and more charming than ever, and left Mr. Richard Anstruther doubly enslaved, and in greater perplexity than before.

Meanwhile the evening for Mrs. Woollaston's reception was fast approaching. She was in a state of effervescing anxiety, and never seemed tired of hoping 'it would

go off well.' She spoke of her approaching entertainment as though it were a gunpowder plot, or a new species of firework that might refuse to go off when the time came for the display.

The evening before Mrs. Woollaston's *r union*, Mr. Anstruther missed seeing Miss Mackenzie, who had stayed at home with a sick headache. He was not used to disappointment, and was in rather an ill humour, and, by way of regaining a healthy tone of mind, took a long, exciting walk of nearly a dozen miles. It was late in the evening, nearly ten o'clock, when he returned slowly to the Manor. He took a short cut across the meadows, then by a narrow path which brought him into a winding bridle road. On the left hand there was a stile, placed cornerwise in a thickset hedge, which led him within twenty feet of the high road. As he approached this spot—indeed, while he was still some yards the other side of it, he heard the voices of a man and woman talking rather loud. He vaulted over the stile; the woman gave a cry of surprise; he turned to apologise for having alarmed her, and found himself face to face with Mrs. Woollaston. His eyes then turned to her companion, and he was amazed to find it was the same rather suspicious-looking character who had inquired the way to Grove Manor on the day he had himself first arrived there, which was now a fortnight ago.

'Has this man insulted you?' he exclaimed, his gaze resting on Mrs. Woollaston's face.

'Yes—no—that is—oh, come away!' she exclaimed, laying her hand on Mr. Anstruther's arm, as though to drag him on; but he stood still, and addressing the stranger he said—

'When I saw you here a fortnight ago I thought you were after

no good; now I know it. Be off, or I shall set the police to look you up.'

'The police!' echoed the man, contemptuously. 'I ain't afraid of that cattle. If anybody's broke the law this time it ain't *me*. We're old friends, the lady and me, and we was having a chat about old times, when you had the bad manners to interrupt us; but never mind, we'll finish our conversation another time. Good evening.'

He touched his cap, jumped over the stile, and went the way Mr. Anstruther had come.

'I'm afraid that fellow has frightened you,' he said, offering his arm to Mrs Woollaston, whose face wore a white look of terror as she glanced over her shoulder to see if he was really gone. She took no heed of Mr. Anstruther, but walked on silently by his side. Once or twice she clasped her hands convulsively, murmuring in an undertone—

'What shall I do? What can I do?'

'If I can be of any service to you, Mrs. Woollaston,' he added, 'trust me I will, and you shall never have cause to regret any confidence you may place in me.'

'I believe you,' she answered, looking steadfastly in his face; 'but I have no confidence to give.'

He saw she was suffering; but he had no desire to intrude upon her confidence any farther than she chose to extend it to him. They walked on in unbroken silence; they reached the gate of her home, and, as she laid her hand upon the latch, she turned to him and said—

'It is no use troubling Mr. Woollaston with my alarm; he could do no good.'

He bowed his head, and they went up the garden together.

'So, so!' thought Mr. Anstruther. 'My pious hostess is one of those persons who have backstairs to their lives as well as to their houses.'

The next day Mrs. Woollaston walked about the house more like a galvanised ghost than a living creature. She avoided anything like a private interview with Mr. Anstruther, and was more reserved and silent than usual during the day. Mr. Woollaston, on the contrary, was in buoyant spirits; and once or twice, when he indulged in a mild joke, she administered a pious rebuke. She could not get out of the habit of clipping and cutting at other people's follies when her own were flourishing.

In the evening the house was ablaze with lights; everything was duly arranged, and things promised to 'go off,' according to the lady's desire. One by one the select society of the Manor crowded Mrs. Woollaston's staircase. She had determined to open the meeting with a prayer; but her intention was so strongly battled against by Mr. Anstruther, that she compromised the matter, and had her visitors played in with the Dead March in Saul, which was cruelly murdered on an indifferent piano. Somebody sang, then somebody else recited a scene from 'Macbeth,' who was treated more barbarously than that noted chieftain treated his numerous victims. This 'Shakespearean reading' was the great success of the evening. The greater part of the enlightened Manorians held it a vicious thing to patronise any theatrical performance; and the beauties of Shakespeare were revealed to them either through the drawling, watery whining of lips that profaned the words they uttered, or were sometimes spouted and thundered in their ears by devoted dramatic geniuses, who believed in them-

selves as the illustrators of the world's great poet.

In the midst of the applauding voices which followed the recitation Anstruther's quick ear detected something like an altercation on the stairs. He recognised one voice at least; Mrs. Woollaston recognised it too, and, with clenched hands and a fixed, despairing look upon her face, took a step towards the door. Anstruther, fearing some *contre-temps* was at hand, whispered to Mrs. Woollaston—

'I'll see to the matter. Compose yourself, and amuse your friends.'

He had hardly uttered these words when he heard the intruder's voice close to the door, exclaiming,

'I know I ain't invited; but I've come for all that, and I think the mistress will make me welcome. My name's Dargle — Mr. James Dargle.'

At that moment Anstruther stepped forward and held out his hand, saying,

'Mr. Dargle, yes — ahem! A friend of mine, Woollaston, though I hardly expected he would turn up to-night. Come, we'll have a little private chat and then rejoin the company.' He passed his hand lightly through that gentleman's arm, who stared at him, exclaiming—

'Well, you are a smart fellow. You ought to have a special certificate for lying.'

'And you ought to have a special certificate for something else, or I am much mistaken,' answered Anstruther, in an undertone, as they entered the little library and closed the door.

While those two remained below, talking low-voiced, a hush gradually fell upon those above, as though a ghost had stalked in among them and breathed a chill upon their spirits. A bubbling intermittent conversation was kept

up for a time; then, one by one, they departed. Mrs. Woollaston spoke no word to urge her guests to stay, and her voice sounded hollow as she said, 'Good night.' Mr. Woollaston also was in a state of trepidation; he saw that Anstruther's recognition of the stranger was a *ruse*, and he dared not hazard a guess as to who the visitor really was. He had paper kites flying all over the country; it might be the proprietor of one of these, or a veritable bailiff come to arrest him, or perhaps a malicious gas-tax, come to 'put out the light' at this inconvenient season; or, indeed it might be any one of that army of duns who harass the lives of imprudent or unprincipled men. The Woollaston funds were never in a highly prosperous condition. They had married each with a false impression of the wealth of the other; they had been mutually deceived, and then mutually agreed to forgive each other's trespasses and put on a good face in the world's eyes, and professed to hold each other in high esteem. In that respect it might be as well if some mismatched couples would follow their example, and make the best of a bad matter.

Mr. and Mrs. Woollaston sat staring blankly in each other's faces after the guests had departed—he in silent wonder, she in guilty knowledge. Neither spoke to utter their thoughts and fears aloud. Presently the study door opened, and Anstruther slowly ascended the stairs, and, with a serious face, summoned Mr. Woollaston to a consultation below, and the two joint possessors of Mrs. Woollaston's charms stood face to face. Mr. Dargle, it seemed, had been married to the lady fourteen years before, and, having been in trouble, was compelled to enjoy a forced residence abroad for the

last seven years. On his return he had looked up his lady, and found she had taken unto herself another husband. Things now came rapidly to a climax Mr. Dargle had little anticipated. He had expected an angry altercation, but was not prepared for Mr. Woollaston's meek submission on the subject. Mr. Dargle, in spite of his moral failings, had a high opinion of Mrs. Woollaston's matured, not to say fading, charms, and he was ready to yield his rightful claim thereto, and allow Mr. Woollaston to retain possession, on payment of a good round sum; but Mr. Woollaston did not see it. Indeed, he seemed ready, and by no means unwilling, to yield up the lady without an appeal to arms, or the intervention of the majesty of the law. How Mrs. Woollaston, *alias* Dargle, conducted herself in this emergency there is no time here to tell; but this we may say, her conduct was worthy of herself. She stood a self-justified sinner, and never once, through all that trying interview, allowed the mask of piety to slip from her face even for a moment.

The next evening, in the 'twilight grey,' a cab, loaded with trunks and bandboxes, rolled from Mr. Woollaston's house, bearing away its late mistress. Mr. Anstruther led her to the vehicle, with all the respect due to an unfortunate sinner; and she bowed her adieu to him with a stern, uncompromising sense of injury written on her face. Mr. Woollaston and Mr. Anstruther sat that evening in the library, talking of many things. Mr. Woollaston tried to put on an aggrieved countenance, laid his hand upon his waistcoat where his heart was supposed to be, and spoke with maudlin sentimentality of the desecration of his hearth and home; but as the hours wore on, and the

punch circulated between them, he grew more genial, and looked as though an incubus had been lifted from his shoulders. His thoughts bubbled up freely, and he confessed that his grief was not inconsolable, as Mrs. Woollaston had been 'rather too much for him.'

Mr. Dargle, seeing how often a counterfeit kind of religion and spurious morality passes upon the world as the real thing, resolved to adopt the profession, and may be heard holding forth within half-a-dozen miles of anywhere. He circulated placards stating that 'James Dargle, the converted pig-stealer, will preach and also sing *this night*, for the benefit of the public morals.' Whether he will permit his wife to join his professional engagements as a converted sinner, or compel her to appear in a divorce court and punish her for bigamy, the future only can tell.

CHAPTER VI.

THE END.

When Grove Manor opened its eyes the next morning, and took a look round upon its neighbours, it was surprised to find the Woollaston Villa with the blinds down and the shutters up, as though they never meant to be opened again. Mute wonderment wandered from house to house. Some of the favoured guests of the previous evening who had been present on the mutual accommodation system, flocked down to the house to know if their spoons, candlesticks, &c. were safe. They were received by Mr. Woollaston in his usual meek, mousy way; he rubbed his hands, smiled, simpered, and informed them that Mrs. Woollaston had been suddenly summoned on a long journey, but as she never came back, and in the

course of a few weeks the house was labelled 'To Let,' they soon got an inkling of the truth, though the bare fact was never stated to them in words. Mr. Anstruther, whose respect for his old college chum Charlie, had by no means deepened, packed his portmanteau and had serious thoughts of leaving, not only Grove Manor, but its neighbourhood for ever; but, somehow, he could not make up his mind, he wavered and wavered, and at last deposited himself and his luggage at a small hotel about a mile and a half distant.

In the cool of the summer evening, he marched solemnly up and down the grassy turf in front of the hotel, smoking his cigar. He was endeavouring to think out some satisfactory plan of action. 'Life is not such a bad thing after all,' he was mentally saying, 'when a fellow knows what to do with it: now here have I been nearly eighteen days in this beastly hole, and I've never wished myself out of it; but I suppose my contentment is slightly owing to that sweet little witch, Kathleen.' Her face, with its coquettish, ever varying graces, rose up in his mind's eye, and led him like a 'will o' the wisp,' into a very slough of perplexity where his thoughts wandered, not knowing how to free themselves. Then he seemed to arrive at some sudden resolution. He flung the cigar from his lips, sprang over the gate, and walked briskly across the meadows, till he came to Kathleen's cottage. Arrived there, he walked up the garden path and knocked at the door as bold as brass; then his courage seemed to be oozing out at his finger ends. He wondered what he should say, what apology he should make for coming? The door was opened by that she-dragon Deborah, of whose ferocity Kathleen had given him some

alarming accounts. He knew it was no use to offer a silvery sop in the pan to this female Cerberus, whose vigilance he and his fair accomplice had pretty well avoided. He had, however, a kindly feeling of regard for old Deb, she had been a faithful servant, friend, and ally of the Mackenzies, through all their troubles, for fifty years, and had been the nurse of the frail fading woman who was the only relative and friend Kathleen possessed in the wide world. The door opened, Deborah inquired who he pleased to want? He boldly asked for Miss Mackenzie? He was immediately admitted. The old servant laid her hand upon his arm and detained him in the passage as she said—

'We've been expecting you this hour—you're the new doctor, I believe.' Before Anstruther could gather his wits to answer her, she added, 'We've had a bad night and a bad day, sir; if you suspect anything serious, please don't say anything to alarm her.'

'Why, what is the matter?' asked Anstruther, a great fear laying hold upon his heart as he remembered he had not seen Kathleen for three days.

'You know, sir, she's been ailing some time, and the shameful way they've behaved to Miss Kathleen, and the wicked things they've said of her—not that we believe 'em, of course, nobody would if they knowed her as we do—but that's neither here nor there, the very hearing such things, and knowing how Miss Kathleen has been treated, has upset her dreadfully.'

He breathed freely again, he had forgotten for the moment that aunt and niece were both Mackenzies. He knew he was receiving the old lady's confidence under false pretences, and gaining fraudulent possession of family

secrets, but he did not feel at all ashamed of himself, quite the contrary; he wanted to know what 'wicked things' they had said of Kathleen: but he put on an hypocritical appearance of interest in the elder lady's nerves as he said briskly,

'Oh, we'll soon shake up the nervous system.'

'Bless you, sir,' interrupted the old woman, 'talk of "shaking up," they've been too much shaken up already.'

'Oh! yes, exactly,' he answered sagaciously, 'that's what I mean, we must shake them back again; but how is Miss Kathleen? well, I hope?'

'Oh, she's well enough,' replied Deborah, 'nothing knocks down her spirits, nor takes away her appetite; them young things is like India-rubber balls, give 'em a knock on one side, and they bound to the other. But it's my old mistress I'm anxious about, sir, for when them Miss Foresters left yesterday, she was almost beside herself with grief and anger.' Anstruther's brow darkened. 'Miss Forester,' he echoed, mentally, 'he knew at once what tales they had been telling; the slanders they had been circulating about Kathleen and himself. He made some passing answer to Deborah, and asked to be shown to the invalid's room. In another moment he found himself in Kathleen's home; there was Kathleen's piano in a corner, Kathleen's pictures on the wall, Kathleen's woolwork on the footstools, and Kathleen's aunt, a small, delicate, elderly edition of Kathleen's self, seated in a low armchair; she smiled up in his face, made an effort to rise up to greet him, as she held out a thin white hand towards him. He took it, drew a chair close to her side and sat down; but he did not choose to appear to her in

false colours even for a moment, and as she began to catalogue her symptoms he said kindly,

'Of course I shall be very glad to listen and to sympathize with you, but don't labour under the impression that I am a medical man. My name is Anstruther, Richard Anstruther.' The mention of his name threw the old lady into a state of nervous agitation. She made a feeble attempt to draw her hand away, and looked in his face with angry indignation painted on her own.

'Your name is unpleasantly familiar to me,' she said, 'I've heard of you—'

'And I don't suppose you have heard anything to my advantage,' he said, interrupting her with his usual *sans souci* air, retaining, however, possession of her hand, and looking on her face with frank, kindly eyes, that had a sort of mesmeric power in them, and were calculated to still all thoughts of evil. The red sunset was lighting up the room when he entered it, but the twilight deepened, and the shadows of evening were falling fast when he left it, having gathered from Miss Mackenzie a brief epitome of the family history, past and present.

Kathleen had gone on some household business into the town some three miles off, and when Anstruther left her home, he turned his steps in the direction she would come in the hope of meeting her. He walked on till he came to a cross road, and there stood irresolute, not knowing which she would choose on her homeward route. She might come either; so he paced up and down the little space which overlooked both roads, and waited till she came in sight; then he walked briskly down the lane to meet her. He held out both hands to her as she came near, and a glad look of

surprise overspread her face as she placed her own therein.

'I've been waiting for you exactly ten minutes,' he said, 'and they have seemed ten hours.'

'How did you know where I had gone?' she asked.

'I got my knowledge from your aunt Ellen.'

'Oh!' exclaimed Kathleen, greatly astonished; 'you don't mean to say you've been there; How could you?'

'Well, you see I did; and I've managed to survive the interview; please don't walk so fast,' he added, 'I'm faint with fatigue; there's a seat under these beeches somewhere; let us sit down and talk and rest a bit.' He was mistaken, however, there were no seats under the beeches, so they sauntered on till they came to a field, where the pleasant clover was lying cut upon the ground. He gathered a heap together, threw himself thereon, and invited her to sit beside him; for a moment they sat silent, she looking down with a vexed expression of countenance; he with his eyes rivetted on her face.

'Kathleen,' he said at last, 'you know well enough what your aunt and I have been talking about. Why did not you tell me?'

'Because I did not want you to know,' she answered; 'besides, why should I tell you things that don't concern you?'

'By Jove, I think they do concern me,' he said, quickly; 'I believe I was the instigator, and I'm sure I was a partner in all your evil doings; you wicked little sinner,' he added, smiling with loving tenderness on her as he spoke. 'It is too bad for all the punishment to fall on you, poor mite. I've a great mind to propose to Miss Forester to-morrow! A man cannot be thoroughly re-

vengeed on a woman unless she's his wife, and I should like to call Miss Forester mine for twelve months—wouldn't I punish her for the malignant lies she's been telling of you!'

'They were not lies at all,' said Kathleen, dolefully; 'she only said what was true. We *did* meet in the organ-loft, and I did walk in the corn-fields with somebody, and, oh,' she added, impatiently, 'it is no use talking about it now. I'm not a bit sorry—and I'd do it again, and I don't care what they say about it.' As she flung this defiance at society's head, she buried her hand in the clover and tossed it aimlessly about, adding, after a moment's pause, 'What business was it of hers? I'm sure we did no harm—did we?'

'Certainly not,' was his emphatic answer.

'The simple truth as we acted it, and as they tell it, is very different,' rejoined Kathleen. 'It did sound awfully bad and wicked the way they put it: but you did not think it was wrong?'

'Quite the reverse,' he replied, virtuously, 'or I should have put a stop to our pleasant meetings as soon as they began; they were pleasant meetings, weren't they?'

'Yes,' she answered, regretfully.

'But like all pleasant things,' he rejoined, 'they must come to an end. I'm going away almost directly.'

'Oh!' she ejaculated, finding he paused for an answer, and for a wonder she had nothing else to say.

'But I could not go,' he added, 'without seeing you to say good-bye.'

'Very kind and considerate of you, I'm sure,' answered Kathleen; 'I hope you won't suffer from the exertion.'

'I don't suppose it matters

much to you whether I go or stay,' he rejoined, with rather an injured air, 'you don't care; and yet I should like to think you missed me a little, Kathleen, just a little.'

'Of course I shall miss you very much, you know that,' she answered; 'it will be very lonely here when you are gone; this was always a stupid place, but it will be worse than ever now.' Her voice trembled, and she seemed half inclined to cry; her lip quivered like a sorrowful child's. 'I'm very sorry you're going away, though of course I knew you could not stay here for ever. I'm only surprised that you've stayed so long.'

'Are you?' he exclaimed, stooping so as to get a good view of her face, and he was glad to find it had a miserable and tearful look; 'and don't you know why I've stayed? Come, Kathleen, can't you guess?'

'I'm sure I don't know why you've stayed,' she answered, 'except that you thought I was going to make a fool of myself, and you'd like to watch the process. She glanced at him with a smile upon her lips and a lugubrious twinkle in her eyes—the very ghost of her old coquetry peeping therefrom.

'I dare say it would be a very interesting study and quite original,' answered Anstruther, 'though, as a rule, I should fancy you amused yourself by making fools of other people. It's a sad thing, but I'm afraid you are a thoroughpaced flirt, Kathleen.'

'If you are only going to say rude, unpleasant things, we had better shake hands and say good-bye at once,' she answered, half rising as though she meant what she said.

'Shake hands by all means,' he answered, adopting the suggestion and drawing her closer to

him, 'but not "good-bye"—indeed I'm not sure it will be good-bye at all.'

'That's nonsense,' she answered, trying to keep her voice steady. 'We must say good-bye some day; it's a disagreeable world, so it is best to say it at once. When I have nauseous physic to take, I take it at a single draught and have done with it.'

'But I dare say you take something sweet after it,' he rejoined; 'but when we have once parted there will be no sweet meetings after that—no more rambles through the cornfields—no more organ-loft *réunions*—no more Bach—no more Dick Anstruthers.'

'No,' she said or rather sighed, softly; and her voice broke down, she could not get out another word.

'But I'm an obstinate, selfish fellow, Kathleen dear—I don't care what the world says. I've found here the sweetest, freshest bit of human nature the world contains. I want it all to myself, and I don't mean to go away without it.' He gathered her in his strong arms as he was speaking, and held her in a close embrace, and for the first time kissed her cheek, lips, and brow. 'With you for my own wee wifey, Kathleen, I don't think I shall ever find myself in a world of boredom again.'

'Oh!' exclaimed Kathleen, growing as red as a peony, as soon as she could free herself from his embrace, 'but I don't think it would be wise or right of us to marry.'

'The dev—!' began the astounded Anstruther, who, man-like, imagined she would be overjoyed at his proposal; then correcting himself, he added sharply, 'What on earth do you mean? why wouldn't it be wise or right?'

'Well,' she answered with a sudden attack of wisdom and pru-

dence combined, 'it would be a leap in the dark, you know: consider, a month ago we were quite strangers—it is only eighteen days since we first met! and yet I'm sure,' she added, with a little sigh, 'I feel as if I had known you all my life.'

'So do I,' he answered, heartily. 'I don't believe I should know you better, if we'd been friends for eighteen years; indeed I've made the calculation, and I've come to the conclusion that I should not know you quite so well.'

'But you don't know anything about me—I don't know anything about you, except your name,' she rejoined, gravely. 'And when people marry they ought to know all about one another.'

'I should be very sorry for you to know all about me,' he answered grimly; 'men who have knocked about town as many years as I have don't care to catalogue their proceedings; and Kathleen,' he added, earnestly, 'I'm willing to take you upon trust—I don't want to know all about *you*, though I dare say,' he added, with a touch of masculine jealousy, 'you've flirted with lots of fellows before *me*.'

'No, I really never have,' she answered, emphatically; 'it wasn't for want of inclination though,' she added, seized with a sudden fit of candour. 'I should have flirted, no doubt, if I'd had the chance; but you are the first victim that fell in my way.'

'And I fell at the first glance like a shot partridge,' he answered, looking rather proud of his fall and seeming very pleasantly wounded. 'I shall reverence Paddington Station to the end of my days, and if ever I'm attacked with a suicidal mania I'll be immolated by the two o'clock express.' He paused a moment, then added with a world of pure true love in

his voice, 'Men and women make love in masks, they say; that has not been our fashion, darling.'

'I don't think there's been much love-making yet,' rejoined Kathleen, shyly, 'though I believe we have conducted ourselves in the most unorthodox and unconventional way.'

'And so we'll conduct ourselves to the end,' replied Anstruther. 'I cannot go back into the world without you; and, I think you'll be content to go with me—won't you, Kathleen?'

She said nothing, but her hand tightened in his, and as she lifted her glowing face, her eyes were humid and their long lashes were heavy with happy tears that would not fall. 'Would she go with him?' Yes, through joy or sorrow, rich or poor, knowing nothing, caring for nothing, content, nay, supremely blest in the one fact, that he loved her.

There were no refractory relations to be consulted on either side, no rebellious parent to be brought to reason, no imbecile aunts or uncles to be propitiated. It was arranged between them that the marriage was to take place as soon as possible, and Aunt Ellen and old Deb, of course were to live with them always. A happy, glorious time it was to them, as they sat piecing out their lives, arranging what the future should do for them, as though *they* were the masters and not the slaves of circumstances!

There were no grand preparations to make. The wedding was a quiet, sensible one, celebrated without any of those extravagant follies which generally characterise those occasions. There was no breakfast, no bevy of bridesmaids, no speeches, no champagne, and 'No Cards,' to herald to the world's eyes their 'Leap in the Dark.'





Drawn by C. O. Murray.]

"BENEATH THE TREES."

A STORY IN TWO VOLUMES. BY MARY F. C. MURRAY.

BENEATH THE TREES.

UNDERNEATH the trees we sit :
 And the breezes, as they flit
 Softly by,
 Throw the shadows of the boughs
 Over little Maudie's brows
 Prettily.

Watchet, winning, wond'ring eyes,
 Gazing on the land that lies
 O'er the lea,
 Building castles in the air—
 How, I wonder, do you there
 Picture me?

Lying near my longing lips
 Are her dainty finger tips.
 Little hand !
 Much I'm tempted you to kiss :
 Very hard it is such bliss
 To withstand !

There it lies, so soft and white ;
 If she knew what dear delight,
 Did she choose,
 To me it might now impart,
 Could she find it in her heart
 To refuse ?

Were I brave enough to dare,
 Would that fringe of golden hair,
 Sweet to see,
 On her forehead lower down,
 Till she turned a cruel frown
 Upon me?

No one near, and no one coming—
 All is still ; save for the humming
 Of a bee
 Hov'ring near my darling's dress,
 (So should I, I must confess,
 Were I he !).

That kiss might the preface be
 To the opportunity
 That I need,
 All my longing to express,
 And my loving tenderness
 Humbly plead.

Sweet white forehead, do not frown !

Do not, pretty eyes, look down

Angrily

When that little hand I've kissed ;

Love, too mighty to resist,

Urges me !

* * *

Fly away you noisy bee,
Do not use my property
For a throne.

Maudie, that most priceless prize—

Maudie, hand, and hair, and eyes,

Is my own !

ALFRED E. T. WATSON.

ART AND FLIRTATION AT SOUTH KENSINGTON.

THE palace of King Cole at South Kensington may be regarded as an eminently favourable type and symbol of certain very characteristic tendencies of the present day. It is framed and conducted so as to gratify two distinct and almost opposite desires. It realises two different and almost contradictory conditions. It is elegantly instructive. It meets the wishes both of the social butterfly and of the earnest student. It is the common rendezvous of the philosophical and of the flippant. Fit for instruction, it is also fit for amusement. It is a place for education, and it is a place for lounge. You may learn if you will the mysterious proportions in which the various ingredients that constitute the sum of what you daily eat or drink are commingled, learn the history of art, acquaint yourself with the secrets of architectural schools, or establish an intimacy with the arcana of science. *Per contra*, there is no necessity for your taking any one of these lessons to heart. You may stroll through the South Kensington galleries, and leave them not a whit the wiser than when you entered

them. You may fix your attention upon the fair feminine forms and faces that are

‘Riper and more real
Than all the nonsense of the stone ideal,’

study the philosophy of costume and the æsthetics of nineteenth-century dress, and take not the slightest heed of the relics of ancient raiment which meet the gaze of the curious in matters of obsolete lore.

The popularity which the South Kensington Museum has in a short time acquired is a fair earnest of the development which it may be expected to attain. Englishmen, as a rule, do not understand the art of lounging—and for a very simple reason, that lounging-places in England are so dismally few. With the exception of South Kensington, there is scarcely a quarter in London which affords the requisite opportunity. There is the British Museum; but the British Museum is a prison to a pleasure-ground, compared with that at South Kensington. Bloomsbury is not an inspiring neighbourhood. Ichthyosauri, plethiosauri, and fossils are edifying, but not en-

livening. These are things whose presence you may ignore, if you so choose, at South Kensington. You may do nothing there but stroll, chat, and flirt; yet you feel you are in an atmosphere which thoroughly justifies the occupation. The accessories of the place convince you that insensibly you must be undergoing a process of self-improvement; and you are certain you are a vastly superior person, as you lunch in the classic refreshment-room, to anything that you could be if the time was passed in less elaborately decorated apartments.

Probably, if all the little episodes of which the South Kensington galleries have been and are the scenes were here published, it would be considered that they have furnished excuses, pretexts, opportunities which were never contemplated as part of the original purpose of their structure. How many designedly-contrived accidental meetings have taken place in their porticoes? How often, in rambles through their labyrinthine paths, has Angelina become detached from her friends, to find herself on a sudden face to face with Augustus? If young Charley Lacqueacre makes it a rule to visit the Museum at certain hours—these hours marvelously coinciding with the time at which Clara Lovelace is in the habit of running across from Thurloe Square, to meet her dearest friend Fanny Deuxtemps—is there any harm? The Museum is free to any one—free, that is, entirely on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Saturdays, and open to all the world on payment of the modest sum of sixpence on the other days of the week. So, at least, argues Miss Lovelace. Mrs. Lovelace scarcely seems to see the matter in the same light. It so happens that one morning, Clara, as usual, being absent in the Museum with Miss

Deuxtemps, Mr. Spinks, the opulent middle-aged iron-merchant, calls. Mrs. Lovelace is decidedly anxious that her daughter should be present. Having her walking things on, the good lady thinks she will go to the Museum, and conduct in person to Thurloe Square Miss Clara. This young lady is duly found by the keen-eyed mamma strolling about with Fanny Deuxtemps, indeed, but also with Mr. Lacqueacre, enjoying herself highly, and accompanying their tour of inspection of the various objects which the Museum contains with a running commentary, more remarkable for the levity of its tone than the profundity of its knowledge. ‘Won’t there be a jolly row!’ murmurs Miss Lovelace to her friend. And Clara is quite right in her prognostications of parental wrath, for a jolly row, in truth, there was. Yes, there is a good deal of art going on at South Kensington; but there is also a good deal of flirtation.

Each is an excellent thing in its way, and we will endeavour to take an impartial glance at both, as they are to be witnessed in the palace of King Cole at South Kensington. It matters not what may be the day of the week that you choose for a ramble through the intricately-winding galleries on the ground floor. As might be expected, on the students’—which are the sixpenny—days, the company is more select, less numerous, and a trifle quieter in its demeanour; yet even on the free-admission days you will not find the art student entirely conspicuous by his absence. He is not, indeed, visible in the picture galleries; but down below, in the great hall, you come across him before many a quaint architectural device, many a scientific model, many an article of old-fashioned ornament or furniture. Yonder you see him stand

intently gazing at that magnificent piece of work in Florentine marble meant to grace the chimneypiece of some Italian noble, which, in its subtle perfection of art and rich amplitude of sculpture, might have been planned and executed by Piranesi. He has a small piece of paper in his hand, on which he hurriedly jots a few lines or writes a few words. His profession is probably that of an ornamental designer or architect, and he has come here to enrich his imagination more than anything else.

But it is not to-day that you will witness the presence of the art student proper, nor in this portion of the building; for that you must go above to the picture-gallery, and you must see that your visit is paid on a Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday. The result of your experience will certainly interest, and possibly profit you. In each one of the separate picture rooms you will discover some half-dozen of more or less earnest workers, endeavouring to reproduce, on canvas or in water-colours, such painting as pleases or suits them. The workers are of both sexes, of all ages, all conditions, and busy, apparently, for every different kind of purpose, some for pleasure, others for business. There are the regular copyists—those to whom the occupation is their sole or chief means of livelihood—male and female, you have them both. Yonder is a man looking some sixty years of age, whom you might have found here any day since the gallery has first been open for copying. He has done any number of pictures. He is a swift and effective worker, and will undertake to give you a very creditable reproduction of any piece which you may choose to select. You will find him first in the gallery in the morning, and last at night.

When there he speeds on his task without let or hindrance, and looks neither to the right nor to the left—nowhere save to his own canvas and that which he has selected as his model. He is probably now doing something on commission, for a good copyist such as he may generally hope to have his hands full.

There is a group which is worth watching for a moment. A lady, a widow evidently, plies busily away with brush and easel, and by her side stand two little children, whom you know at a glance to be fatherless. This is a tale which tells itself—a mother suddenly left with two little ones to support, friendless and alone in the world. Heaven help her! How was she to help herself? Are you not certain, as you look at the thin, wan face, that that good mother has been put to many a sore shift to provide a meal for these her two little ones? Would you be wrong if you were to conjecture that she has tried more means than one, and tasted, in more than one attempt, the bitter fruits of failure? that she has earned her few shillings when opportunity offered as a daily governess, and that it is only after much oft-repeated effort that she has been able to gain the skill as a copyist of pictures which she now evinces, or to command the employment which she now fortunately can? Love, love for the two little ones beside her, wings her brush to-day. Let us hope that its labour will not be profitless. There is many a worker such as this to be seen in the picture gallery at South Kensington. You may see fair young faces stooping industriously, without their attention flagging for a moment, over their canvas; and you can tell that it is the remembrance of the dear ones at home, the mother, the father,

the brothers, or the sisters, which stimulates and inspires them. It is surprising to note the high average standard of merit visible in most of these copies. They vary, of course; and if you want to form an adequate notion of that variety you could scarcely do better than supplement your glance at the works in the process of completion by a stroll down the Brompton Road, casting your eyes by the way into the windows of the picture dealers, whose name in this neighbourhood is legion. Almost all the paintings there offered on sale are the handiwork of the South Kensington copyists.

But you will find food for reflections of a very different character from those which serve to bring home to you a somewhat saddening sense of the severity of the great struggle for existence in these modern days. The sportive element is by no means wanting amid the sketching in the South Kensington gallery. The opportunity is a favourable one for studying the different varieties of that somewhat numerous class which we may indicate by the phrase 'artistic girl of the period.' There never was a time when a certain order of young ladies were so fond of prattling on art subjects as at present. They wear the theme threadbare; they introduce it by main strength in the pauses of the dance, or amid the small talk of dinner-tables. You are overwhelmed with technical jargon, and remorselessly put through all your æsthetic facings. For such young ladies as these the picture-gallery at South Kensington on copying days is a great place. 'Young' is an epithet to be applied to some of them rather by a courteous use of language than by the actual warrant of facts: for the artistic girl of the period is of every age,

from sweet seventeen up to fat, fair, and forty, or more probably somewhat meagre fifty. You have the young lady who prides herself on her præ-Raphaelite countenance rejoicing in her amplitude of igneous locks; the young lady of a certain age, whose art style is of the severest kind, and, so far as the outer woman is concerned, by no means of a decorative character: and you have the young lady whose artistic proclivities principally display themselves in her very dainty toilettes and very elegant costumes. Specimens of each one of these classes you may witness hard at work to-day at South Kensington—at work for every kind of purpose and from every sort of motive. There are governesses, who eke out their slender incomes, at the same time that they improve their own proficiency, by producing copies of favourite pictures, which some cunning dealers will buy for a mere nothing, and out of which they may not improbably make a very considerable sum. Some, of course, belong to the regular order of professional copyists: others work, or go through a process which they are pleased to call by that name, for amusement or improvement. And the contrasts thus presented are sometimes curious enough. At one easel sits a young lady very diligently at work, plainly dressed, but with scrupulous neatness. She is not a regular copyist: she is probably an erewhile student of the art schools, and is now endeavouring to qualify herself for the professional career of an artist. Within a few yards of our young friend there, two other fair painters are visible—at work too, but their work is of a nominal and most precarious description. Each of these young ladies is daintily, elegantly, even extra-

vagantly dressed. They came to the Museum in their carriage this morning, and will depart in it this afternoon. I think if you were to overhear what they are saying to each other the words would turn out to be, 'Horribly unpunctual they are!' or something to that effect. Who are the 'they' in question? You are not left long in doubt. Two gentlemen approach in the distance: the young ladies in question suddenly become marvelously attentive to their occupations. 'Fancy how odd meeting you here!' After this no very large amount of painting is accomplished. The two gentlemen have a taste for a decidedly humorous kind of criticism, which is not conducive to continuous labour. There is a good deal of innocent flirtation done, but not quite so much art as might be desirable.

Yonder sits a nimble little lady who appears able to paint and flirt simultaneously, active with her brush and voluble with her tongue. She has considerable power of repartee, and in the task of administering the badinage more or less complimentary which the youthful cavalier who dallies by her side essays is a trifle critical. It is close on two o'clock; let us descend into the refreshment room, for the period has now arrived when exhausted nature hints that the ravages made upon the system by the demands of art shall be repaired as well as may be through the instrumentality of lunch. And marvellously healthy appetites those fair artists have. Augustus manifests some slight degree of surprise as the artistic object of his affection displays perfect readiness to try the excellence of some dish to which he—Augustus—casually alludes. There is a great deal of laughter and much

merriment. We may drop the art entirely if you will for the time, and simply go in for flirtation. And this much we may say, *en passant*: it would be difficult to mention another apartment in London into which one might stroll with the certainty of seeing so much feminine elegance and beauty as into the refreshment room of the South Kensington Museum about luncheon time on a students' day. The sight which both this and the picture-galleries themselves on such occasions afford is unique, and it is worth seeing. South Kensington, as has been remarked before, possesses great capacities, which should be developed, as a place of lounge. There are certain young men of an intrusive, impertinent, and familiar turn of mind who might be dispensed with.

To cease to view art at South Kensington in reference to flirtation, what are the most important facts connected with these students' days? We have sufficiently illustrated by how many different kinds of students, and for what different purposes, they are employed. Camden Town and Belgravia are both, on these occasions, represented in the South Kensington galleries. A certain proportion of the copying artists on these students' days belong to the South Kensington Art Training Schools. *Apropos* of these schools there are a few words which may be said. Their object is twofold—first, to provide gratuitous, or almost gratuitous, instruction for those who intend to follow the occupation of professional designers: secondly, to improve in some measure the standard of national taste, and even to create the taste, which it is hoped the professional designers will gratify, by attracting at fixed

charges a considerable portion of the general outside public. It can scarcely be said that the business of designing is in a very prosperous way. Some time since an exceedingly clever young woman, who had a distinct genius for the work, went down from London to the manufacturing districts in quest of employment. After long waiting and repeated disappointments she was at last offered fifteen shillings a week for work which would occupy her every day from nine in the morning till seven in the evening. The true account of the matter is that designing is no longer the separate business that it once was. In every factory there are clever workmen who can design also; and the system of local art schools, branching out from South Kensington, naturally favours this state of things. A really clever student in the art schools at South Kensington may count with tolerable certainty upon procuring employment from the authorities of the Museum itself. There is always some copying to be done; besides, these dignitaries have it always in their power to give recommendations, frequently asked as they are to whom the task of copying some picture on the premises can be best assigned.

The method of procuring permission to copy in the galleries of the South Kensington Museum is simple enough. Regular forms of application exist, and if the application be properly made there is no reason to doubt that it will be granted. Certain conditions there are indeed annexed—and these very reasonable and natural ones. It is quite right that all applicants

should be liable to give some proof of their competence, otherwise the galleries would be crowded with mere idlers. In the case of application being made to copy the works of any living artist, such artist's permission must accompany the application. A student's copying ticket is procurable at the following rates—6*d.* for one week; 1*s.* 6*d.* for a month; 3*s.* for three months; and 10*s.* for a year. Finally, the number of those admitted to copy at the same time is regulated by the keeper, so as not to interfere with public convenience.

Such is the general method of procedure at South Kensington—no unimportant factor in the great artistic movement which has of late years taken place in England. Any person who has noticed the quiet enthusiasm with which so many of the copyists at whose miscellaneous *personnel* we have been glancing pursue their labours, and how satisfactory the results of those labours are; and who has watched the unflinching patience with which the workers touch and retouch till they have acquired truth and accuracy to the model before them, cannot doubt that the influence of the system is likely to prove highly salutary. There are an artistic capacity and even enthusiasm latent in the English people which need only to be developed. And it is a satisfactory sign that the pictures which there are the most numerous applications to copy are just those which one would desire to see adopted as models—the best specimens of truthful English art.

E.



THE TALK OF THE TOWN.

THE Talk of the Town becomes indistinct by reason of yawns and general boredom. Nothing but the faint echoes of the scandals of the season is heard about Pall Mall when August broods in blazing heat about the squares and streets. The parched tongue of gossip must slake its insatiable thirst along the moor or in the drawing-room of the country house. Let us hope that there will be kinder influences at work the further we are from London, and that those twin curses of conversation, malicious invention and gross exaggeration, will not follow us to our rural pleasures and pastimes. If we could only leave these behind, wrapped up and put away with our Rotten Row costumes and best articles of furniture, we might possibly learn to do without them in the winter, and not find ourselves so very much in need of them next year. Ah, but we cannot! tongues will wag, palms will itch, and ears will require tickling, so long as we eat, drink, make merry, marry and are given in marriage, born and die.

It is often said that a predilection for gossip and scandal is peculiarly the mark of vain and mean minds. I am sorry to say that I do not think the vice is common only to such a class of intellect. The fact is, people cannot help interesting themselves, one way or another, in their neighbour's affairs. And it might fairly be argued that if gossip or scandal were never heard in the *salons* of society, while the fact might be taken as going far to prove that the constituent members of society had grown very cautious and reserved, and, pos-

sibly, extremely charitable, a different but equally plausible deduction might be that everybody had become very selfish, and absolutely indifferent to the domestic and social lot of the Browns, Jones, and Robinsons by whom we might happen to be surrounded. Gossip, indeed, has become a necessity of social existence; without it five o'clock tea would be poison without an antidote, and dinner-parties would be dumb. If we never talked of anything but *belles-lettres*, politics, and travels, what a world of intolerable pedants we should be; we should individually be Quarterly or Westminster Reviewers without a subscribing public to read us. Our first melancholy duty would be to assist at the funeral of Mrs. Grundy; our last would probably be to assist at her resurrection, and leave her to delight a posterity which declined to submit to our uncritical socialism.

Still, argue as we may, it is impossible to deny that the majority of mankind do certainly appear to take something more than a proper interest in the troubles and sorrows of their fellows. It is not a pleasant truth to have to record that two people generally appear to take a morbid delight in recounting to each other the weaknesses and misfortunes of an absent friend, under the guise of sympathy, or the pretence of tenderness. Why do we so unnecessarily puzzle ourselves about the supposed incompatibility between Johnson's style of living and the income that is popularly assigned to him? Why in the world should it cause us such searchings of heart that Mr. White is going to marry Miss Black,

though neither has any present or prospective resources for the maintenance of the little piebalds that in the course of nature will arrive to swell the census of her Majesty's subjects? Why should it concern us that the wealthy and handsome Earl of Bloomsbury has arrived at mature age, but, as far as we are aware, has not chosen to contract a matrimonial alliance? And why, too, should we marvel so much that the elegant Miss Diana Castlebar fainted in a ball-room and has since left town (though not for the family seat), and that Mrs. Castlebar's 'At Homes' have been announced in the 'Morning Post' as unavoidably postponed? Surely such a trivial incident need not occasion so much 'head-shake,' and such a considerable amount of 'We could, an if we would,' or 'There be, an if they list,' against which mysterious signs of superior wisdom Hamlet warned his ancestors. Well, well, the rain it raineth every day—particularly in this favoured clime—and the showers of the Talk of the Town fall upon the just and upon the unjust.

The amenities of literature have recently been more than usually exposed to view in a modern battle of the bards. Mr. Robert Buchanan objects emphatically to what he calls the Fleshly School of Poetry, and subjects to a severe analysis the poems and sonnets of Mr. Dante Gabriel Rossetti. It is plain that the individual distinguished by such a name could not help being a poet, and his friend (both in the spirit and in the flesh), Mr. Algernon Charles Swinburne, has impaled the hostile critic upon a revengeful pin, and kept him wriggling under a Microscope of eighty-eight page power. Undoubtedly, it is a very pretty quarrel as it stands; and the author of 'The Man Accurst,' by

representing the Almighty as bathing in the Waters of Life, and casually asking an angel sitting at the gate of Paradise what the miserable Last Man is doing, certainly lays himself open to material repartee from the heroes of the school he condemns. It has been urged against Milton that he committed a grave error in making God argue with Satan, and Mr. Buchanan's strange notion of the Omniscient ever and again asking, 'What doth the man?' while the strange lavation of the Deity in the Waters of Life goes on, is equally open to considerable animadversion. Still, Mr. Buchanan may plead in justification the opening of the Book of Job, and so, perhaps, can quote higher authority than the amatory poets; unless, indeed, these choose to fall back upon the Song of Solomon. The looker on, however, upon the direful strife, who has no overwhelming partiality for one poet or the other, will not improbably arrive at the conclusion that, as far as the controversy has at present gone, Mr. Buchanan has not suffered much from being placed under Mr. Swinburne's Microscope; nor has Mr. Rossetti much benefited by his friend's chivalrous but scarcely discreet defence. If such a mere prose writer as myself might venture an opinion, I should be inclined to say that Mr. Swinburne would have done wisely if he had left Mr. Rossetti to answer for himself; and then he would not have been betrayed into the publication of a pamphlet which resembles an angry scream, and which is chiefly remarkable for its absence of dignity, and its profusion of coarse invective. The author of 'Our Lady of Pain' and 'Before a Crucifix,' is gifted with a fatal facility of writing, a breathless fluency of language, a tropical and

feverish brilliancy of imagination, an unpardonable disregard of the veneration of nineteen centuries, and an apparent desire to enthrone vice in the seat of virtue, and to colour the former with rose hues while he blocks up the other with a wall of ice. To hear the gentleman who can 'hunt sweet love and lose him between white neck and bosom,' and who can publish such a revolting episode as 'The Leper,' complaining that Mr. Tennyson's 'Vivien' is nothing but a vulgar and repulsive offender against morality, would be amusing if such subjects *could* amuse. Imagine what 'Vivien' would be in Mr. Swinburne's hands! No, let us not imagine it; for his warm genius would have been probably more terribly misapplied in describing Vivien's fleshly charms, and her seduction of Merlin, than in 'Laus Veneris,' or 'Before Dawn.'

It is, I think, to be regretted that Mr. Buchanan did not single out Mr. Swinburne as the object of his attack, and not Mr. Rosetti. He has undoubtedly selected the weakest adversary, and not the worst. Mr. Rosetti's writings possess neither the fascination nor the flow of Mr. Swinburne's, nor can he boast the inborn genius or glowing imagination of his friend. Possibly he may personally be the happier for the fact; and he may, perhaps, to a certain extent command our sympathy, that David should have mistaken an ordinary son of Anak for Goliath of Gath. He is, however, to be congratulated that Mr. Swinburne considered that the round stone fitted his own forehead, and has presented his unabashed visage to the hostile sling. The Philistine, however, takes a deal of killing; and I do not believe that Mr. Buchanan will take another shot; nor would the public care to pursue the con-

troversy further. The process of dissecting the Fleshly School of Poetry is by no means appetizing; and the more its peculiar economy is laid bare to our gaze, the less we like it.

That Mr. Sheridan Le Fanu has a grisly fancy, and a grim power over his readers, no one who has perused 'Uncle Silas' can deny. I remember reading that uncomfortable story one August night, at Hospenthal, on the top of the pass of the St. Gothard. I had been fishing all day in the Ober Alp See, and although the weather had reminded me more of pike-fishing in November than fly-fishing in the middle of summer, I had succeeded in making a fair basket of admirable red trout, and after the *table d'hôte*, I felt inclined to sleep. But I happened to have purchased the Tauchnitz edition of 'Uncle Silas,' in Lucerne, and I lazily opened the first volume when I began to smoke. All bodily fatigue soon disappeared, and I did not go to bed till I had finished that dreadful story. I cannot say that 'In a Glass Darkly,' Mr. Le Fanu's last publication, fascinated me so much; but it certainly cannot fail to rivet the attention of those who are at all interested in the narration of events which are by no means of every day occurrence. I do not think it is to be considered as a reproach to an individual mind if it owns to an interest in the strange and marvellous. The revelations of science are sometimes startling to the student, and compel the admiration of the most superficial inquirer; and the theories of the physiologist, though cast in the guise of fiction, cannot fail to command attention even from the most reluctant listeners. We live in a highly materialistic and utilitarian age, when the value of every article is measured by the

laws of supply and demand, and what it will fetch in open market; and individual plans and actions are mercilessly judged by their results. Perhaps it is with a certain sense of relief that we occasionally turn from the perpetual hurry and worry of the times to the contemplation of things mysterious, and find refreshment in mental strolls along the bye-paths of fertile imagination. Thus it is that even the most practical and prosy people take an unacknowledged delight in ghost-stories. Of course they loudly and ostentatiously disavow the slightest belief in the reality of such things, but at the same time they are unable to conceal their dislike to sleeping in haunted rooms. Is it a thing to be laughed at, this carefully repressed but wide-spread belief in supernatural occurrences, and in the close proximity of the spirit world? Surely not; for it is an abiding witness to the fact that we entertain an ineradicable conviction of the immortality of the soul. It does not concern us much whether matter is indestructible or not, and we are willing to leave that controversy to be settled by the investigations of the chemist; but it is of considerable importance to us that we may hopefully believe ourselves to be something more than a compound of water, lime, starch, and gas.

But, putting such considerations out of sight, we may safely say that no arguments will ever destroy in the minds of the vast majority of mankind an innate and intuitive belief in the supernatural. I have heard people say that nothing would induce them to believe in ghosts, but that if they saw one it would send them out of their senses. Can any statements be more contradictory? What they mean is that they re-

gard supernatural appearances with such extreme dismay, that one such visitation would upset their intellectual equilibrium, and this means that they *do* believe in the possibility of such occurrences. Surely he is the more sensible reasoner who merely declines to admit the truth of a proposition for which he has no experimental basis whereon he may satisfactorily rely, but is willing to modify his incredulity, if an accumulation of facts appear to justify him in doing so, without surrendering altogether, and at a single instance, his intellectual powers.

It must not be thought, however, that the author of the collection of stories published under the title of '*In a Glass Darkly*,' relies entirely upon the influences of ghostly things. His best story, '*The Dragon Volant*,' though weird and ghastly in the extreme, falls within the natural order. '*Carmilla*,' on the other hand, draws upon our credulity to a far greater extent than any ordinary legend. This was originally published, if I remember right, in the '*Dark Blue*' magazine; it is the story of a vampire, and I do not think that vampires are quite so interesting as ghosts. According to the author of '*Carmilla*,' a vampire is simply a revolting beast, and its material habits and sanguinary appetites bring it immediately to the touch of experience and reason, and render faith in such existences impossible. The only vampires we have undoubted belief in are those mentioned in a conversation between Mark Tapley and Martin Chuzzlewit, with reference to a bed. Still, Mr. Sheridan Le Fanu has a pleasant way of telling dreadful things; and he certainly succeeds in exciting our attention, and in making us think strange thoughts.

Those who take an interest in alleged supernatural occurrences may study with advantage a paper on 'Apparitions,' to be found among the 'Miscellanies' of the late Dr. Symonds, edited by his son. Indeed, the whole volume is well worthy of perusal, as the work of an eminent physician, and scholar of no ordinary refinement. Most particularly I would call attention to the essays on 'Sleep and Dreams,' and 'Habit.' These calm and quiet writings, so full of tender thought, nobility of spirit, and sound common sense, are most refreshing in this age of superficial sensationalism.

I wonder what Dr. Symonds would have said about M. Louis Figuier's book entitled 'The Day after Death.' M. Figuier's speculations are, unquestionably, deeply interesting, and, as far as possible, his theories are well worked out; but I doubt if he will succeed in making many converts, though I admit that his creed is likely to command a considerable amount of sympathy among such persons as are perpetually seeking 'some new thing.' His notion is that souls have many probationary spheres, and that when a soul has attained to a certain degree of purification by the earthly filters it has passed through, it soars towards perfection in the ethereal spaces of the universe, and eventually finds its Paradise in the sun. The sun, M. Figuier argues, is undoubtedly the sustaining cause of life and light, and is itself sustained by the continual acquisition of purified souls. It is impossible in the brief space at my disposal to give anything like an analysis of the deductions from physical facts which lead M. Figuier to his conclusions. I can only say that the book is curious, and deserves perusal. How far it is convincing must be

left to the individual student's powers of weighing evidence; and it certainly will strike some readers as odd that the perfected spirit should find its home in realms which are encircled with flaming hydrogen gas. Again, it seems to militate against the truth of his theories, the fact that our sun is only one of many suns; and the eternal fitness of things seems to require that the perfected units of the entire creation should eventually meet in some all-embracing home. We can imagine many earths and many suns, but the very idea of God forbids the notion of multiplied heavens. To say that theologians are not likely to accept the conclusions of the imaginative Frenchman, is not, perhaps, in these critical and sceptical days, to strike him very severely; and, to do him justice, he expresses a desire to be considered not to be out of harmony with the traditions of Christianity. Indeed, his transmigration of souls may not be incompatible with Purgatory, or a finite Hell; and there is something beautiful, and not decidedly heterodox, let us hope, in the idea of the radiance of perfected beings stimulating the struggling orders of their ascending brethren. It reminds one of the doctrine of the intercession of saints and angels.

'Erewhon' will probably obtain a wider circulation than the book we have just noticed. The author evidently passed 'Over the Range,' to stay with Mr. Nosnibor, for the purpose of illustrating the great importance of sanitary improvements and the progress of machinery. The able and learned member for Taunton, when he described Mr. Disraeli's policy as a 'policy of sewage,' never intended to pay a compliment to the sagacity and sound sense of the leader of the Conservatives, but

he undoubtedly did do so. The Erewhonians would have loaded Mr. Disraeli with honours, for in proclaiming *Sanitas sanitatum, omnia sanitas*, as his political motto, he cut at the root of what this not unreflective people considered the greatest crime. It is odd that it should have taken so many centuries to teach mankind to cope with dirt; odder still that reputed saints should be signalized for their familiarity with filth and vermin. It is said that cleanliness is next to godliness. I take the liberty to say that I consider it to be a condition precedent—for nobody can be really godly unless he is physically clean. A man's mind can never attain to the true appreciation of purity if his surroundings are materially impure. As the power of conviction is shown by outward practice, so purity of mind must be judged by purity of body. A foul mind is certain to be a diseased one, and an unclean body cannot be a healthy one.

Our practice is not so far removed from the Erewhonian habit of treating sickness as a crime as some people might think. Culpable inattention to sanitary matters is very properly punishable at law; and if persons are not absolutely considered criminals for being ill, they are in certain cases held pecuniarily responsible if, by their carelessness, they infect others. Health is the greatest gift of God to man, and as such should be guarded with the most jealous care. The Vaccination and Contagious Diseases Acts show that we regard the being infected with certain virulent complaints very much as a sin against the commonwealth; and it is possible that the principle may yet be extended somewhat further. Neither are we altogether free from the moral perversion which the so-

journer in 'Erewhon' discovered among the inhabitants in that they regarded crime as a sickness deserving of compassion. It has been forcibly said of late that there is an increasing class of humanitarians who regard the reform of the criminal as far more important than the protection of the innocent. Nor are we unaware that it is sometimes difficult to draw the line of demarcation between the fraud that deserves our reprobation, and the failure that commands our pity. We have a good many Mr. Nosnibors among us, but it is to be feared they are hardly likely to send for a 'straitener,' and take the medicine as uncomplainingly and as punctually as their kinsman in 'Erewhon.'

I must not pass over in silence my visits to the gallery in Bond Street, to see M. Gustave Doré's great picture of 'Christ leaving the Prætorium.' In point of actual size, nobody can deny that the painting is certainly great; but whether it is worthy to be called a triumph of the age, and a masterpiece of modern art, is a question which is likely to be warmly discussed by the critics for some time to come. For my own part, I am glad to see that on this occasion M. Doré has sternly repressed his leanings to the grotesque and weird which characterize so many of his other works, and has endeavoured to place worthily on canvas a marvellous historical incident (if the 'Westminster Review' will permit me to call it so), very dramatically treated, but at the same time free from coarse theatrical effect. One could not fail to be amused by the comments of the many spectators, bounteously and somewhat courageously delivered. Several divine creatures, on their way to the Park, were at the Doré Gallery the last evening I was there, and it

is to be regretted that the artist was not there in the place of his bust, to profit by the criticisms, favourable and otherwise, which he would have heard. He might possibly have gone home and painted the fly upon the locomotive with extreme satisfaction.

When all one's small but necessary cavillings and fault-findings (or one would not deserve the name of critic) have had their way, it is impossible not to admit that this is a noble picture, and cannot be damned as a magnificent failure. In one sense, all such pictures must, to a certain extent, be failures, from the very nature of the subject. It has been given to some few to paint the features of the Man of Nazareth with surpassing power and inspired intelligence. Raphael's Transfiguration, in the Vatican is, perhaps, the loftiest attainment of all such endeavours; and in modern times we may point with pride to Holman Hunt's 'Finding of the Boy Saviour in the Temple,' but never can the human portraiture reach absolutely to the ideal of devotion. Man's conceptions are necessarily imperfect, and as he is powerless to produce the God-like mind, despite the assertions of poetry, and the large praise of the disciples of philosophers, so must he ever fail to depict on canvas the lineaments in which the human is merged in the Divine. But M. Doré's figure of Christ descending the steps towards the cruel cross is full of sublimity, though it may not altogether satisfy the desire of the beholder. It is not easy to say towards what object or objects the eyes are gazing. Some critics, I observe, have described them as fixed upon the Maries, but to me their glance appears to pass above and beyond the crowd, as if they saw something which none else could see.

One upturned hateful face there is among the throng—it might be that of Ahasuerus—that seems to be within the line of vision; but upon the calm features of the Christ there is nothing of the rebuke which bade the sarcastic Jew wander through the ages of time till He should come again. No; those quiet eyes, so full of softened sorrow, seem to me to range beyond the surging scene, and to scan in prophetic vision the teeming results through centuries to come, of the unjust condemnation and the martyrdom of the cross. Such, one may well believe, would be the all-embracing thought of the Redeemer of Mankind, as He passed from the judgment-seat to the scaffold. Whether this is the artist's idea or not, I cannot say; but the features and expression of Jesus stand out in splendid contrast to all the other faces that crowd the canvas. Sorrow, intense malignancy, harsh scorn, gluttoned vengeance, sneering scepticism, doubtful inquiry, absolute indifference, are admirably depicted in the faces of the Maries, blaspheming Jews, bigoted priests, cynical Sadducees, bystanders of all nations, and Roman soldiers; the last-mentioned are most striking figures, notably that of the soldier immediately preceding our Lord.

We are given to understand that M. Doré considers this the greatest work of his artist career; as he is in the prime of life we have reason to hope that he will not permit this picture to remain alone in solitary grandeur. He has shown us that his genius is not limited to conceptions of the grotesque, the fanciful, and the sensational; and it is probable that the efforts of maturer thoughts and ripened experience, will gain for him a yet higher place in the realms of art than that which he

has fairly won by his 'Christ leaving the Prætorium.'

'Look here, upon this picture, and on this.' Leave the Doré gallery in Bond Street, and purchase the last number of 'London—a Pilgrimage, by Gustave Doré and Blanchard Jerrold.' It is sincerely to be hoped that the historian of a hundred years hence will not rely solely for his descriptions of the metropolis upon these designs by M. Doré. 'The Ladies Mile' conveys no accurate idea whatever, and the 'Confirmation of Westminster Boys in Westminster Abbey' is chiefly remarkable for the appearance of the impossible Bishop of London who is engaged in performing the sacred rite. As for the 'Derby Day—Tattenham Corner,'—well, I can only say it looks very much as if the artist had evolved it out of his inner consciousness. The race is nothing more than a column of fifty horses, four deep, galloping towards the grand stand. On the whole we are inclined to think that these illustrations are inferior to those of the 'Idylls of the King,' and while they will not detract from M. Doré's reputation, they certainly will add nothing to it. The letter-press, too, is hardly worthy of Mr. Blanchard Jerrold, being made up principally of old gossip with which we have been made familiar by the late Mr. Thackeray and the present Mr. G. A. Sala, combined with some not particularly recondite reflections upon things in general. Both these pilgrims, indeed, seem to pursue their way with unboiled peas in their shoes.

The Session of 1872 has come to an end—unless, indeed, in these days of perpetual surprises we should find ourselves engaged in an European war before snipe-shooting fairly begins; in which case it may be necessary to summon

our legislators before Christmas. As far as we can see, however, the Session is over, and the majority have achieved a triumph—the Ballot Bill has passed into law. Henceforth, so say its advocates, the purity of election is secured; and the only wealth that can be expended on an election, is the boundless wealth of a persuasive tongue. If the best man does not invariably win, it will be because he is deficient in the art of appropriating to his own uses the credulity of the electors, and fails to satisfy them that his return to Parliament will bring about in due time the realisation of the visions of Utopia, when the relations between capital and labour shall be finally adjusted; when we shall all be equal; and when poverty shall be no more.

The Ballot Bill! Stupendous fact—panacea for every municipal ill—balm of sore wounds—great Nature's second course, and Radical's dessert—shall I not welcome your large provisions for my hungry soul? Do you not profess to have reduced to a vanishing point the entrance-fee into the chatty club at Westminster? and have you not thereby placed the fruits of political ambition within the reach of *FREE LANCE*? Shall I not jot down the Talk of the Town from the cross-benches—nay, possibly from the front seats occupied by Her Majesty's Government, as Under Secretary—I aspire no higher at present—for the Red Tape and Sealing Wax Department? Gentlemen-electors of the Borough of Littlefaith, need I tell you that industry and commerce are making gigantic strides in your midst, and that hitherto your claims—social and otherwise—have been lamentably overlooked? Gentlemen, you want a man who will be your representative indeed—a man of the people

—a child of toil—permit me to draw your attention to this direction. I put it to you as men of sense, Are you willing to permit the continuance of an abuse which sends to Parliament, as representatives of the people, the luxurious capitalist and the unfledged lordling? Away with the traditions and customs that make such men the framers of our laws! Why, my friends, they buy you up like so much stock—they invest in you as they would in railway shares, and look for their interest in their power with their party. Do you conceive it possible that such men can be truly honest and have the good of the commonweal at heart? I say to these monopolizers of parliamentary honours—Room for me! Room for **FREE LANCE**. Room for the political adventurer—whom the passing of the Ballot Bill has brought into existence again—untrammelled by the traditions of party, bound to no Gladstone or Disraeli, recommended by nothing but a shifty brain, and unshakable clinging to his friends. Parliament shall be triennial, gentlemen-electors if you please; and if at the end of three years I have not looked to your personal interests more than to those of the entire British Empire, black-ball me next time as an ungrateful brute. I own that I am not in a position to subscribe largely to your institutes, your hospitals, your churches and chapels; nor

can Madame **FREE LANCE** guarantee the presentation of your daughters at court; and as **FREE LANCE** Castle is unfortunately situated in Spain, it would be too much to expect you to enjoy our hospitality, and assist at our fêtes at such a distance; but you will, gentlemen, I am sure, take the will for the deed, and, believe me, you shall always find a hearty welcome. I may have opponents who will be prepared to give you material guarantee that they will spend so many hundreds or thousands of pounds among you if you elect them; but surely you who have roundly condemned all corrupt practices at elections, will be above temptations; and will not permit such sordid considerations to move you from the contemplation of any sterling merits, which I am ready to place before you at any length. It is in order that such deserving people as myself may find their worthy place in the Legislature that the Ballot Bill has been passed; and I rely confidently, noble-hearted and single-minded electors of the Borough of Littlefaith, upon your good feelings, and unwillingness to disappoint the expectations of your benefactors who have so recently conferred such inestimable benefits upon you.

Accept, gentlemen, the assurances of my highest consideration, and permit me to subscribe myself—your devoted servant,

FREE LANCE.







Drawn by M. E. Edwards.]

[Frontispice.]

AUTUMN.

LONDON SOCIETY.

OCTOBER, 1872.

A SIMPLETON.

A Story of the Bay.

BY CHARLES READE.

[At the Author's particular request this story is not illustrated.]

CHAPTER IV.

ROSA cried 'Oh!' and put up her hands to her face in lovely confusion, colouring like a peony.

'I beg your pardon,' said Christopher, stiffly, but in a voice that trembled.

'No,' said Rosa, 'it was I ran against you. I walk so fast now. Hope I did not hurt you.'

'Hurt me?'

'Well, then, frighten you?'

No answer.

'Oh, please don't quarrel with me in the street,' said Rosa, cunningly implying that he was the quarrelsome one. 'I am going on the beach. Good-bye.' This adieu she uttered softly, and in a hesitating tone that belied it. She started off, however, but much more slowly than she was going before; and, as she went, she turned her head with infinite grace, and kept looking askant down at the pavement two yards behind her: moreover she went close to the wall, and left room at her side for another to walk.

Christopher hesitated a moment; but the mute invitation, so arch yet timid, so pretty, tender, sly, and womanly, was too much for him, as it has generally proved

for males, and the philosopher's foot was soon in the very place, to which the simpleton with the mere tail of her eye directed it.

They walked along side by side, in silence, Staines agitated, gloomy, confused, Rosa radiant and glowing; yet not knowing what to say for herself, and wanting Christopher to begin. So they walked along without a word.

Falcon followed them at some distance to see whether it was an admirer or only an acquaintance—a lover he never dreamed of; she had shown such evident pleasure in his company, and had received his visits alone so constantly.

However, when the pair had got to the beach, and were walking slower and slower, he felt a pang of rage and jealousy, turned on his heel with an audible curse, and found Phoebe Dale a few yards behind him with a white face and a peculiar look. He knew what the look meant; he had brought it to that faithful face before to-day.

'You are better, Miss Lusignan.'

'Better, Doctor Staines? I am health itself, thanks to—hem!'

'Our estrangement has agreed with you.' This very bitterly.

'You know very well it is not that. Oh, please don't make me cry in the streets.'

This humble petition, or rather meek threat, led to another long silence. It was continued till they had nearly reached the shore. But, meantime, Rosa's furtive eyes scanned Christopher's face, and her conscience smote her at the signs of suffering. She felt a desire to beg his pardon with deep humility; but she suppressed that weakness. She hung her head with a pretty, sheepish air, and asked him if he could not think of something agreeable to say to one after deserting one so long.

'I am afraid not,' said Christopher, bluntly, 'I have an awkward habit of speaking the truth; and some people can't bear that, not even when it is spoken for their good.'

'That depends on temper, and nerves, and things,' said Rosa, deprecatingly; then softly, 'I could bear anything from you now.'

'Indeed!' said Christopher, grimly. 'Well, then—I hear you had no sooner got rid of your old lover, for loving you too well, and telling you the truth, than you took up another: some flimsy man of fashion, who will tell you any lie you like.'

'It is a story, a wicked story,' cried Rosa, thoroughly alarmed. 'Me, a lover! He dances like an angel; I can't help that.'

'Are his visits at your house like angels'; few and far between?' And the true lover's brow lowered black upon her for the first time.

Rosa changed colour, and her eyes fell a moment. 'Ask papa,' said she. 'His father was an old friend of papa's.'

'Rosa, you are prevaricating.

Young men do not call on old gentlemen, when there is an attractive young lady in the house.'

The argument was getting too close; so Rosa operated a diversion. 'So,' said she, with a sudden air of lofty disdain, swiftly and adroitly assumed, 'you have had me watched.'

'Not I; I only hear what people say.'

'Listen to gossip, and not have me watched! That shows how little you really cared for me. Well, if you had, you would have made a little discovery, that is all.'

'Should I?' said Christopher, puzzled. 'What?'

'I shall not tell you. Think what you please. Yes, sir, you would have found out that I take long walks every day, all alone; and what is more, that I walk through Gravesend, hoping—like a goose—that somebody really loved me, and would meet me, and beg my pardon; and if he had, I should have told him it was only my tongue, and my nerves, and things, my heart was his, and my gratitude; and after all, what do words signify, when I am a good, obedient girl at bottom: so that is what you have lost by not condescending to look after me—fine love!—Christopher, beg my pardon.'

'May I ask for what?'

'Why, for not understanding me; for not knowing that I should be sorry the moment you were gone. I took them off the very next day, to please you.'

'Took off whom?—oh, I understand. You did? Then you are a good girl.'

'Didn't I tell you I was? A good, obedient girl; and anything but a flirt.'

'I don't say that.'

'But I do. Don't interrupt. It is to your good advice I owe

my health; and to love anybody but you, when I owe you my love and my life, I must be a heartless, ungrateful, worthless —. Oh, Christopher, forgive me! No, no; I mean beg my pardon.'

'I'll do both,' said Christopher, taking her in his arms. 'I beg your pardon, and I forgive you.'

Rosa leaned her head tenderly on his shoulder, and began to sigh. 'Oh, dear, dear! I am a wicked, foolish girl: not fit to walk alone.'

On this admission, Christopher spoke out, and urged her to put an end to all these unhappy misunderstandings, and to his new torment, jealousy, by marrying him.

'And so I would this very minute, if papa would consent. But,' said she, silyly, 'you never can be so foolish to wish it. What! a wise man like you marry a simpleton!'

'Did I ever call you that?' asked Christopher, reproachfully.

'No, dear; but you are the only one who has not: and, perhaps I should lose even the one if you were to marry me—oh, husbands are not so polite as lovers; I have observed that, simpleton or not.'

Christopher assured her that he took quite a different view of her character: he believed her to be too profound for shallow people to read all in a moment: he even intimated that he himself had experienced no little difficulty in understanding her at odd times. 'And so,' said he, 'they turn round upon you, and, instead of saying "we are too shallow to fathom you," they pretend you are a simpleton.'

This solution of the mystery had never occurred to Rosa, nor indeed was it likely to occur to any creature less ingenious than a lover: it pleased her hugely; her fine eyes sparkled, and she nestled

closer still to the strong arm that was to parry every ill, from mortal disease to galling epithets.

She listened with a willing ear to all his reasons, his hopes, his fears, and, when they reached her father's door, it was settled that he should dine there that day, and urge his suit to her father after dinner; she would implore the old gentleman to listen to it favourably.

The lovers parted, and Christopher went home like one who has awakened from a hideous dream to daylight and happiness.

He had not gone far before he met a dashing dog-cart driven by an exquisite. He turned to look after it, and saw it drive up to Kent Villa.

In a moment he divined his rival; and a sickness of heart came over him. But he recovered himself directly, and said, 'If that is the fellow, she will not receive him now.'

She did receive him though: at all events the dog-cart stood at the door, and its master remained inside.

Christopher stood, and counted the minutes: five—ten—fifteen—twenty minutes—and still the dog-cart stood there.

It was more than he could bear. He turned savagely, and strode back to Gravesend, resolving that all this torture should end that night, one way or other.

Phoebe Dale was the daughter of a farmer in Essex, and one of the happiest young women in England, till she knew Reginald Falcon, Esq.

She was reared on wholesome food, in wholesome air, and used to churn butter, make bread, cook a bit now and then, cut out and sew all her own dresses, get up her own linen, make hay,

ride anything on four legs; and for all that was a great reader, and taught in the Sunday-school to oblige the vicar; wrote a neat hand, and was a good arithmetician, kept all the house accounts and farm accounts. She was a musician too—not profound, but very correct; she would take her turn at the harmonium in church, and, when she was there, you never heard a wrong note in the bass, nor an inappropriate flourish, nor bad time. She could sing too, but never would, except her part in a psalm. Her voice was a deep contralto, and she chose to be ashamed of this heavenly organ, because a pack of envious girls had giggled and said it was like a man's.

In short, her natural ability, and the range and variety of her useful accomplishments, was considerable; not that she was a prodigy; but she belonged to a small class of women in this island, who are not too high to use their arms, nor too low to cultivate their minds; and, having a faculty and a habit, deplorably rare amongst her sex, viz., Attention, she had profited by her miscellaneous advantages.

Her figure and face both told her breed at once: here was an old English pastoral beauty; not the round-backed, narrow-chested cottager, but the well-fed, erect rustic, with broad, full bust, and massive shoulder, and arm as hard as a rock with health and constant use; a hand finely cut, though neither small nor very white, and just a little hard inside, compared with *Luxury's* soft palm; a face honest, fair, and rather large than small; not beautiful, but exceeding comely; a complexion not pink and white, but that delicately-blended, brick-dusty colour, which tints the whole cheek in fine gradation, outlasts other complexions twenty years, and beau-

tifies the true Northern, even in old age. Grey, limpid, honest, point-blank, searching eyes; hair true nut brown, without a shade of red or black, and a high smooth forehead, full of sense. Across it ran one deep wrinkle that did not belong to her youth; that wrinkle was the brand of trouble, the line of agony. It had come of loving above her, yet below her; and of loving an egotist.

Three years before our tale commenced, a gentleman's horse ran away with him, and threw him on a heap of stones by the roadside, not very far from Farmer Dale's gate. The farmer had him taken in: the doctor said he must not be moved. He was insensible; his cheek like delicate wax; his fair hair like silk stained with blood. He became Phoebe's patient, and, in due course, her convalescent: his pale handsome face, and fascinating manners, gained one charm more from weakness; his vices were in abeyance.

The womanly nurse's heart yearned over her child; for he was feeble as a child; and, when he got well enough to amuse his weary hours by making love to her, and telling her a pack of arrant lies, she was a ready dupe. He was to marry her as soon as ever his old uncle died, and left him the means, &c., &c. At last he got well enough to leave her, and went away, her open admirer, and secret lover. He borrowed twenty pounds of her the day he left.

He used to write her charming letters, and feed the flame: but one day her father sent her up to London, on his own business, all of a sudden; and she called on Mr. Falcon at his real address. She found he did not live there—only received letters. However, half-a-crown soon bought his real address, and thither Phoebe proceeded, with

a troubled heart, for she suspected that her true lover was in debt, or trouble, and obliged to hide. Well, he must be got out of it, and hide at the farm meantime.

So the loving girl knocked at the door, asked for Mr. Falcon, and was shown in to a lady rather showily dressed, who asked her business, and introduced herself as Mrs. Falcon.

Phoebe Dale stared at her, and then turned pale as ashes. She was paralysed, and could not find her tongue.

'Why, what is the matter now?' said the other, sharply.

'Are you married to Reginald Falcon?'

'Of course I am. Look at my wedding-ring.'

'Then I am not wanted here,' faltered Phoebe, ready to sink on the floor.

'Certainly not, if you are one of the by-gones,' said the woman, coarsely; and Phoebe Dale waited to hear no more, but found her way, heaven knows how, into the street, and there leaned, half fainting, on a rail, till a policeman came and told her she had been drinking, and suggested a cool cell as the best cure.

'Not drink; only a breaking heart,' said she, in her low mellow voice that few could resist.

He got her a glass of water, drove away the boys that congregated directly, and she left the street. But she soon came back again, and waited about for Reginald Falcon.

It was night when he appeared. She seized him by the breast, and taxed him with his villainy.

What with her iron grasp, pale face, and flashing eyes, he lost his cool impudence, and blurted out excuses. It was an old and unfortunate connection; he would give the world to dissolve it, if he could do it like a gentleman.

Phoebe told him to please himself: he must part with one or the other.

'Don't talk nonsense,' said this man of brass; 'I'll un-Falcon her on the spot.'

'Very well,' said Phoebe. 'I am going home; and if you are not there by to-morrow at noon—' She said no more, but looked a great deal. Then she departed, and refused him her hand at parting. 'We will see about that by-and-by,' said she.

At noon my lord came down to the farm, and, unfortunately for Phoebe, played the penitent so skilfully for about a month that she forgave him, and loved him all the more for having so nearly parted with him.

Her peace was not to endure long. He was detected in an intrigue in the very village.

The insult struck so home that Phoebe herself, to her parents' satisfaction, ordered him out of the house at once.

But, when he was gone, she had fits of weeping, and could settle to nothing for a long time.

Months had elapsed, and she was getting a sort of dull tranquillity, when one evening, taking a walk she had often taken with him, and mourning her solitude and wasted affection, he waylaid her, and clung to her knees, and shed crocodile tears on her hands, and, after a long resistance, violent at first, but fainter and fainter, got her in his power again, and that so completely that she met him several times by night, being ashamed to be seen with him in those parts by day.

This ended in fresh promises of marriage, and in a constant correspondence by letter. This pest knew exactly how to talk to a woman, and how to write to one. His letters fed the unhappy flame: and, mind you, he sometimes de-

ceived himself, and thought he loved her; but it was only himself he loved. She was an invaluable lover; a faithful, disinterested friend; hers was a vile bargain; his an excellent one, and he clung to it.

And so they went on. She detected him in another infidelity, and reproached him bitterly; but she had no longer the strength to break with him. Nevertheless, this time she had the sense to make a struggle. She implored him, on her very knees, to show her a little mercy, in return for all her love. 'For pity's sake, leave me!' she cried. 'You are strong, and I am weak. You can end it for ever; and pray do. You don't want me; you don't value me: then leave me once and for all, and end this hell you keep me in.'

No; he could not, or he would not, leave her alone. Look at a bird's wings!—how like an angel's? Yet so vile a thing as a bit of birdlime subdues them utterly: and such was the fascinating power of this mean man over this worthy woman. She was a reader, a thinker, a model of respectability, industry, and sense; a business-woman, keen and practical; could encounter sharp hands in sharp trades; could buy or sell hogs, calves, or beasts with any farmer or butcher in the country; yet no match for a cunning fool. She had enshrined an idol in her heart, and that heart adored it, and clung to it, though the superior head saw through it, dreaded it, despised it.

No wonder three years of this had drawn a tell-tale wrinkle across the polished brow.

Phoebe Dale had not received a letter for some days: that roused her suspicion and stung her jealousy; she came up to London by fast train, and down to Gravesend directly.

She had a thick veil, that concealed her features; and, with a little inquiring and bribing, she soon found out that Mr. Falcon was there with a showy dog-cart. 'Ah!' thought Phoebe, 'he has won a little money at play, or pigeon-shooting; so now he has no need of me.'

She took lodgings opposite him, but observed nothing till this very morning, when she saw him throw off his dressing-gown all in a hurry, and fling on his coat. She tied on her bonnet as rapidly, and followed him, until she discovered the object of his pursuit. It was a surprise to her, and a puzzle, to see another man step in, as if to take her part. But, as Reginald still followed the loitering pair, she followed Reginald, till he turned and found her at his heels, white and lowering.

She confronted him in threatening silence for some time, during which he prepared his defence.

'So it is a *lady* this time,' said she, in her low, rich voice, sternly.

'Is it?'

'Yes, and, I should say, she is bespoke. That tall, fine-built gentleman. But I suppose you care no more for his feelings than you do for mine.'

'Phoebe,' said the egotist, 'I will not try to deceive you. You have often said you are my true friend.'

'And I think I have proved it.'

'That you have. Well, then, be my true friend now. I am in love—really in love—this time. You and I only torment each other; let us part friends. There are plenty of farmers in Essex that would jump at you. As for me, I'll tell you the truth; I have run through every farthing; my estate mortgaged beyond its value—two or three writs out against me—that is why I

slipped down here. My only chance is to marry Money. Her father knows I have land, and he knows nothing about the mortgages; she is his only daughter. Don't stand in my way, that is a good girl; be my friend, as you always were. Hang it all, Phoebe, can't you say a word to a fellow that is driven into a corner, instead of glaring at me like that; there, I know it is ungrateful—but what can a fellow do? I must live like a gentleman, or else take a dose of prussic acid; you don't want to drive me to that. Why you proposed to part, last time, yourself.'

She gave him one majestic, indescribable look, that made even his callous heart quiver, and turned away.

Then the scamp admired her for despising him, and could not bear to lose her. He followed her, and put forth all those powers of persuading and soothing, which had so often proved irresistible. But this time it was in vain. The insult was too savage, and his egotism too brutal, for honeyed phrases to blind her.

After enduring it a long time with a silent shudder, she turned and shook him fiercely off her like some poisonous reptile.

'Do you want me to kill you? I'd liever kill myself for loving such a thing as *thou*. Go thy ways, man, and let me go mine.' In her passion she dropped her cultivation for once, and went back to the *thou* and *thee* of her grandam.

He coloured up, and looked spiteful enough; but he soon recovered his cynical egotism, and went off whistling an operative passage.

She crept to her lodgings, and buried her face in her pillow, and rocked herself to and fro for hours in the bitterest agony the heart

can feel, groaning over her great affection wasted, flung into the dirt.

While she was thus, she heard a little commotion. She came to the window and saw Falcon, exquisitely dressed, drive off in his dog-cart, attended by the acclamations of eight boys. She saw at a glance he was gone courting; her knees gave way under her, and, such is the power of the mind, this stalwart girl lay weak as water on the sofa, and had not the power to go home, though just then she had but one wish, one hope, to see her idol's face no more, nor hear his wheedling tongue, that had ruined her peace.

The exquisite Mr. Falcon was received by Rosa Lusignan with a certain tremor, that flattered his hopes. He told her, in charming language, how he had admired her at first sight, then esteemed her, then loved her.

She blushed, and panted, and showed more than once a desire to interrupt him, but was too polite. She heard him out, with rising dismay, and he offered her his hand and heart.

But, by this time, she had made up her mind what to say. 'Oh, Mr. Falcon,' she cried, 'how can you speak to me in this way? Why, I am engaged. Didn't you know?'

'No; and I am sure you are not; or you would never have given me the encouragement you have.'

'Oh, all engaged young ladies flirt—a little; and everybody here knows I am engaged to Dr. Staines.'

'Why I never saw him here.'

Rosa's tact was a quality that came and went; so she blushed, and faltered out, 'We had a little tiff, as lovers will.'

'And you did me the honour to select me as catspaw to bring him on again. Was not that rather heartless?'

Rosa's fitful tact returned to her.

'Oh, sir, do not think so ill of me. I am not heartless, I am only unwise, and you are so superior to the people about you. I could not help appreciating you, and I thought you knew I was engaged, and so I was less on my guard. I hope I shall not lose your esteem, though I have no right to anything more. Ah! I see by your face I have behaved very ill; pray forgive me.'

And, with this, she turned on the waters of the Nile; better known to you, perhaps, as 'crocodile tears.'

Falcon was a gentleman on the surface, and knew he should only make matters worse by quarrelling with her. So he ground his teeth, and said, 'May your own heart never feel the pangs you have inflicted. I shall love you, and remember you till my dying day.'

He bowed ceremoniously, and left her. 'Ay,' said he, to himself, 'I *will* remember you, you heartless jilt, and the man you have jilted me for. Staines is his d——d name, is it?'

He drove back crestfallen, bitter, and, for once in his life, heart-sick, and drew up at his lodgings. Here he found attendants waiting to receive him.

A sheriff's officer took his dog-cart and horse, under a judgment; the disturbance this caused, collected a tidy crowd, gaping and grinning, and brought Phoebe's white face, and eyes swollen with weeping, to the window.

Falcon saw her, and brazened it out. 'Take them,' said he, with an oath. 'I'll have a better turn-out by to-morrow, breakfast-time.'

The crowd cheered him for his spirit.

He got down, lit a cigar, chaffed the officer and the crowd, and was, on the whole, admired.

Then another officer, who had been hunting him in couples with the other, stepped forward and took *him*, for the balance of a judgment debt.

Then the swell's cigar fell out of his mouth, and he was seriously alarmed. 'Why, Cartwright,' said he, 'this is too bad. You promised not to see me this month. You passed me full in the Strand.'

'You are mistaken, sir,' said Cartwright, with sullen irony, 'I've got a twin-brother; a many takes him for me, till they finds the difference.' Then, lowering his voice, 'What call had you to boast in your club you had made it right with Bill Cartwright, and he'd never see you? That got about, and so I was bound to see you, or lose my bread. There's one or two I don't see, but then they are real gentlemen, and thinks of me as well as themselves, and doesn't blab.'

'I must have been drunk,' said Falcon, apologetically.

'More likely blowing a cloud. When you young gents gets a smoking together, you'd tell on your own mothers. Come along, colonel, off we go to Memmashee.'

'Why it is only twenty-six pounds. I have paid the rest.'

'More than that; there's the costs.'

'Come in, and I'll settle it.'

'All right, sir; Jem, watch the back.'

'Oh, I shall not try that game with a sharp hand like you, Cartwright.'

'You had better not, sir,' said Cartwright; but he was softened a little by the compliment.

When they were alone, Falcon

began by saying it was a bad job for him.

'Why I thought you was a going to pay it all in a moment.'

'I can't: but I have got a friend over the way, that could, if she chose. She has always got money, somehow.'

'Oh, if it is a she, it is all right.'

'I don't know. She has quarrelled with me; but give me a little time. Here, have a glass of sherry and a biscuit, while I try it on.'

Having thus muffled Cartwright, this man of the world opened his window, and looked out. The crowd had followed the captured dog-cart, so he had the street to himself. He beckoned to Phoebe, and, after considerable hesitation, she opened her window.

'Phoebe,' said he, in tones of tender regret, admirably natural and sweet; 'I shall never offend you again; so forgive me this once. I have given that girl up.'

'Not you,' said Phoebe, sullenly.

'Indeed I have. After our quarrel, I started to propose to her; but I had not the heart; I came back and left her.'

'Time will show. If it is not her, it will be some other, you false, heartless villain.'

'Come, I say, don't be so hard on me in trouble. I am going to prison.'

'So I suppose.'

'Ah, but it is worse than you think. I am only taken for a paltry thirty pounds or so.'

'Thirty-three, fifteen five,' suggested Cartwright, in a muffled whisper, his mouth being full of biscuit.

'But once they get me to a sponging-house, detainers will pour in, and my cruel creditors will confine me for life.'

'It is the best place for you. It will put to a stop to your

wickedness; and I shall be at peace. That's what I have never known, night or day, this three years.'

'But you will not be happy if you see me go to prison before your eyes. Were you ever inside a prison? Just think what it must be to be cooped up in those cold grim cells, all alone; for they use a debtor like a criminal now.'

Phoebe shuddered; but she said, bravely, 'Well, tell *them* you have been a-courting. There was a time I'd have died, sooner than see a hair of your head hurt; but it is all over now, you have worn me out.'

Then she began to cry.

Falcon heaved a deep sigh. 'It is no more than I deserve,' said he. 'I'll pack up my things, and go with the officer. Give me one kind word at parting, and I'll think of it in my prison, night and day.'

He withdrew from the window with another deep sigh, told Cartwright, cheerfully, it was all right, and proceeded to pack up his traps.

Meantime Phoebe sat at her window, and cried bitterly. Her words had been braver than her heart.

Falcon managed to pay the trifle he owed for the lodgings, and presently he came out with Cartwright, and the attendant called a cab. His things were thrown in, and Cartwright invited him to follow. Then he looked up and cast a genuine look of terror and misery at Phoebe. He thought she would have relented before this.

Her heart gave way; I am afraid it would, even without that piteous and mute appeal. She opened the window, and asked Mr. Cartwright if he would be good enough to come and speak to her.

Cartwright committed his prisoner to the subordinate, and knocked at the door of Phoebe's lodgings. She came down herself and let him in. She led the way upstairs, motioned him to a seat, sat down by him, and began to cry again. She was thoroughly unstrung.

Cartwright was human, and muttered some words of regret that a poor fellow must do his duty.

'Oh, it is not that,' sobbed Phoebe. 'I can find the money. I have found more for him than that, many's the time.' Then, drying her eyes, 'But you must know the world, and I daresay you can see how 'tis with me.'

'I can,' said Cartwright, gravely; 'I overheard you and him, and, my girl, if you take my advice, why let him go. He is a gentleman skin deep, and dresses well, and can palaver a girl, no doubt; but bless your heart, I can see at a glance he is not worth your little finger, an honest, decent young woman like you. Why it is like butter fighting with stone. Let him go; or I will tell you what it is, you will hang for him some day, or else make away with yourself.'

'Ay, sir,' said Phoebe, 'that's likelier; and if I was to let him go to prison, I should sit me down and think of his parting look, and I should fling myself into the water for him before I was a day older.'

'Ye mustn't do that anyway. While there's life there's hope.'

Upon this Phoebe put him a question, and found him ready to do anything for her, in reason—provided he was paid for it. And the end of it all was, the prisoner was conveyed to London; Phoebe got the requisite sum; Falcon was deposited in a third-class carriage bound for Essex. Phoebe paid his

debt, and gave Cartwright a present, and away rattled the train conveying the handsome egotist into temporary retirement, to wit, at a village five miles from the Dale's farm. She was too ashamed of her young gentleman and herself to be seen with him in her native village. On the road down he was full of little practical attentions; she received them coldly; his mellifluous mouth was often at her ear, pouring thanks and praises into it; she never vouchsafed a word of reply. All she did was to shudder now and then, and cry at intervals. Yet, whenever he left her side, her whole body became restless; and, when he came back to her, a furtive thrill announced the insane complacency his bare contact gave her. Surely of all the forms in which love torments the heart, this was the most terrible and pitiable.

Mr. Lusignan found his daughter in tears.

'Why, what is the matter now?' said he, a little peevishly. 'We have had nothing of this sort of thing lately.'

'Papa, it is because I have mis-conducted myself. I am a foolish, imprudent girl; I have been flirting with Mr. Falcon, and he has taken a *cruel* advantage of it—proposed to me—this very afternoon—actually!'

'Has he? Well, he is a fine fellow; and has a landed estate in Norfolk. There's nothing like land. They may well call it real property—there is something to show: you can walk on it, and ride on it, and look out of window at it: that is property.'

'Oh, papa! What are you saying? Would you have me marry one man, when I belong to another?'

'But you don't belong to any one—except to me.'

'Oh yes I do. I belong to my dear Christopher.'

'Why you dismissed him before my very eyes; and very ill you behaved, begging your pardon. The man was your able physician, and your best friend, and said nothing that was not for your good; and you treated him like a dog.'

'Yes, but he has apologized.

'What for? for being treated like a dog?'

'Oh, don't say so, papa! At all events, he has apologized, as a gentleman should whenever—whenever——'

'Whenever a lady is in the wrong.'

'Don't, papa; and I have asked him to dinner.'

'With all my heart. I shall be downright glad to see him again. You used him abominably.'

'But you need not keep saying so,' whined Rosa. 'And that is not all, dear papa; the worst of it is, Mr. Falcon proposing to me has opened my eyes. I am not fit to be trusted alone. I am too fond of dancing; and flirting will follow somehow. Oh, think how ill I was a few months ago, and how unhappy you were about me. They were killing me. He came and saved me. Yes, papa, I owe all this health and strength to Christopher. I did take them off, the very next day, and see the effect of it, and my long walks; I owe him my life, and, what I value far more, my good looks—la! I wish I had not told you that—and after all this don't I belong to my Christopher? How could I be happy, or respect myself, if I married any one else? And, oh, papa! he looks wan and worn. He has been fretting for his simpleton; oh, dear, I mustn't

think of that—it makes me cry; and you don't like scenes, do you?'

'Hate 'em!'

'Well then,' said Rosa, coaxingly, 'I'll tell you how to end them. Marry your simpleton to the only man who is fit to take care of her. Oh, papa, think of his deep, deep affection for me, and pray don't snub him if—by any chance—after dinner—he should *happen* to ask you—something.'

'Oh, then it is possible that, by the merest chance, the gentleman you have accidentally asked to dinner, may, by some strange fortuity, be surprised into asking me a second time for something very much resembling my daughter's hand—eh?'

Rosa coloured high. 'He might, you know. How can I tell what gentlemen will say, when the ladies have retired, and they are left alone with—with——'

'With the bottle. Ay, that's true: when the wine is in, the wit is out.'

Said Rosa, 'Well, if he should happen to be so foolish, pray think of *me*; of all we owe him, and how much I love him, and ought to love him.' She then bestowed a propitiatory kiss, and ran off to dress for dinner: it was a much longer operation to-day than usual.

Dr. Staines was punctual. Mr. Lusignan commented favourably on that.

'He always is,' said Rosa, eagerly.

They dined together; Mr. Lusignan chatted freely, but Staines and Rosa were under a feeling of restraint, Staines in particular: he could not help feeling that before long his fate must be settled. He would either obtain Rosa's hand, or have to resign her to some man of fortune who would

step in ; for beauty such as hers could not long lack brilliant offers. Longing, though dreading, to know his fate, he was glad when dinner ended.

Rosa sat with them a little while after dinner, then rose, bestowed another propitiatory kiss on

her father's head, and retired with a modest blush, and a look at Christopher that was almost divine.

It inspired him with the courage of lions, and he commenced the attack at once.

(To be continued.)

NINI AND NINETTE.

THERE'S a quiet Breton village
Mid pine trees sweetly set,
And the queen-maid of the village
Is christened love Ninette. !
Ninette! Ninette!
Our hearts were sad and heavy
When we parted, love Ninette.

There's a quaint old Norman village,
White-housed, beside the sea,
Where dwells a little maiden,
Love calls her my Nini.
Nini! Nini!
Our eyes were wet with weeping,
When we parted, love Nini!

And though far away in England
I seem to see them yet ;
Nini comes back at morning,
At noon-tide comes Ninette.
Nini! Ninette!
Here's a song for you, Nini love,
And a rose for love Ninette!

FRED. S. WEATHERLY, B.A.





Drawn by C. O. Murray.]

AN AUTUMN IDYLL.

"About my breaking heart, brown Autumn gleams."

AN AUTUMN IDYLL.

AH me ! how sad and sombre is the wood ;
 The gay green changing into reddened rust,
 As love will sometimes sicken into lust,
 And surface-gilding make the bad seem good.

My footprints mark the well-remembered way,
 That leads through beech-shade to the stately oak,
 Where thy sweet song glad echoes once awoke,
 When all Time seemed but one long summer-day.

Chill memory breathes the cadence round me now,
 And dreamland voices chant thy melody,
 Full of too joyous hopes of days to be,
 In numbers fond and careless, loud and low—

‘ Fair times—sweet chimes ! ah ! happy, happy hour !
 The village-bells ring out their welcome peal,
 And promise blessings to the true and leal ;
 Dear chimes !—soft times ! Love is a fadeless flower.

‘ Old trees—young breeze ! how oft have poets sung
 The thousand glorious mysteries of May,
 And led us onward to the longest day !
 Soft breeze !—dear trees ! True love is ever young !

‘ Fond hours—bright flowers ! and youth, and love, and song,
 Glad times and chimes, old trees, and summer air,
 What are your charms, if my love be not there ?
 Angels of Fate, keep me not from him long.

‘ Ring out, gay bells, for lo ! my love doth come !
 Bow, oak and beech, before his winsome form ;
 Murmur not, breeze, of any coming storm—
 He comes, to lead me to a sun-girt home !’

Peace, lying echoes ! Homes for her and me,
 Far other are than those of Spring day-dreams ;
 About my breaking heart brown Autumn gleams,
 And her self-slaughter troubles the great sea.

CHARLES LAWRENCE YOUNG.

AN OCTAVE OF FRIENDS.

BY E. LYNN LINTON. |

VIL

THE TURNER VANES.

NO one who knows the Turner Vanes can complain of monotony in their friends. In fact, they are half-a-dozen people in one, and you never know, when you leave them, in which character you will meet them again. They stick to nothing; neither to friends nor to principles, neither to places nor to politics; and if you expect to take them up where you set them down, you will find yourself absurdly mistaken. The absence of a few weeks makes all the difference in the world to them; and you have to follow them into quite another sphere of thought and feeling from that which they affected when you were last together. Say that you left them High Church, Tory, and exclusive, you find them Broad, Radical, cosmopolitan; or, perhaps, gone over to the Free Grace Baptists; or, maybe, migrated to Rome. You left them loose and worldly; you find them prim and converted. You remember many a pleasant dance, and many a good rubber at guinea points at their house, and you have heard whispers of Sunday doings with cues and cards which however you do not repeat, being neither ill-natured nor certain. But after the summer's disintegration is at an end, and you all drift back to your places again, you are met with a severe rebuke in which occurs the term 'devil's books,' when you playfully allude to *that*

odd trick; and Mrs. Turner Vane looks as if she would like to annihilate you for your tactless remembrance of former folly connected with the *deux temps* and the cotillon.

In the olden times of three months back, Turner himself was a staunch Gladstonian, and went with the Government through thick and thin, even as far as our *Ædile*. Now he is going to vote for the Conservative candidate in the coming election; and he says that Disraeli is the only man who can save the country. He had argued once in favour of the Irish Church Bill against a whole roomful of infuriated Orangemen, now he swears no blacker deed was ever inscribed on the page of history, and he talks of the cause of religion and humanity as betrayed past redemption by the Act. So you see it is rather difficult to steer correctly by the Turner Vane chart; and the result for themselves is a wake of mental 'dogs' legs' that look odd enough as one gazes back and takes in the whole course at a glance.

It is the same with their friendships. You never know where to have them. Say that you parted with them for the summer on the best of terms; they full of geniality and kindness—you following suit.

'Come and see us when you come back, old fellow,' says Turner Vane heartily, wringing

your hand. 'You know where you can always find a knife and fork.'

'Come and see us as soon as ever you come back,' chimes in the flute-like voice of Mrs. Vane, with her most coaxing accent.

And as you leave them you say to yourself that they are the dearest, nicest, frankest people in the world, and your best and truest friends. So you go on your vacation-trip of six weeks, and when you return to work and London you call on them. They are 'Not at home' though you saw Mrs. Turner Vane herself peep over the blind, then suddenly run back to catch the servant at the door; and you distinctly heard her say, 'John, I am not at home to Mr. L.' The next evening you meet them at the Vespas, when they all but cut you.

'Hallo!' says Vespa in a loud voice; 'what's all this about, old man? Cut? You are surely never going to stand *that*! I tell you what it is—you must talk it up, and I'll back you!'

Perhaps the next time you meet them however, they are as kind and hearty as they ever were in their warmest days; and the third time they may have frozen again. You can never feel sure beforehand what it will be; and your own manner has no more effect in determining theirs than the rather useless experiment of tickling the back of a tortoise to make him put out his head or draw it in again. If you remonstrate with them, you make them angry; so that they accuse you of fancies, and wanting to quarrel with them, and they suppose that ridiculous Mrs. Vespa has put you up to this, and they cannot submit to be taken to task by you or anybody else; with all the other silly things which people say when

they try to shift the burden of their own wrong-doing on to the shoulders of the innocent remonstrant. Or they may be satirical, and ridicule you for your sensitiveness, establishing a raw which they never allow to quite heal again. Or they may fall back on their short-sightedness—they say they are short-sighted, but you sometimes find they can see farther and clearer than yourself, and that their kind of myops is of that uncertain character which puzzles the unlearned so much. Or they take their stand on their honesty and sincerity, and ask you pathetically how you could doubt them? Or they fall on your neck with effusive tenderness, crying, 'My dear creature, you never were more mistaken in your life!' We are incapable of change—we are *the* constant friends of our circle—what *could* have made us cool? and to you, too, of all people in the world! And so you go on again with an uneasy sense of having made a fool of yourself; and of course the Turner Vane did not mean to slight you; and what a sensitive bit of quiver-grass you are!

The Turner Vane give very pleasant parties at times; very stupid ones at others; but they are difficult people to visit, because you never know what kind of thing it is to be to which you are invited. I have more than once received a friendly informal note from them asking me to dine there, just to meet a few friends, and I have gone in half undress, and found ten of the twenty guests titled, and the other ten millionaires. And I have received a printed card for an 'At Home,' and have got myself up regardless of expense; when I have been ushered into the smaller drawing-room where there were two whist-tables, and eight fogies

playing for silver threepennies. Sometimes they give a really splendid entertainment for half a dozen people; and sometimes I have dined there with twice that number, and not enough to eat. I have seen twelve well-placed people and eight potatoes; and I have seen eight nobodies, and twelve peaches, when they were four shillings apiece. In their dress too, it is the same thing. One season Mrs. Turner Vane and the girls go about in hodden grey, till you scarcely know them at a short distance from charity-school girls; the next they outshine your neighbour the banker's wife, who seems to exist only for the sake of her toilettes. Sometimes they live as if they had thousands a year to play with; and the next, for no reason that the world ever knows, they come down to hired cabs and a cadaverous little 'buttons.'

They are always migrating from house to house and district to district; and they take periodic eclipses abroad when no one knows anything about them, where they have gone, what they are doing, when they are coming back. When they do come back they do it suddenly, with a bound, like harlequin springing through a trap-door, and take up their place again as if they had never left it; meeting their latest acquaintances, made just before they left last year, as if they were brothers and sisters—their latest acquaintances having clean forgotten *them*; or reappearing among their oldest friends with a queer, dazed kind of manner, like owls in the sunshine, as if they were uncertain who they were and how they would be received. For the matter of that however, you seldom see the same set of people two years together at their house. They change their friends ap-

parently, as they change their clothes; and without quarrel or annoyance drop in and drop out again, no one understands why. They are wearied of people sooner than any family of my acquaintance; and they do not seem to understand the meaning of the word stability. They are the embodied types of change and uncertainty, and to trust to them is to lean on very slender reeds indeed.

Still, they are charming when the glass points to fair, and their friendship, while it lasts, is infinitely seductive. The only thing to remember with them is that it will not last. Beautiful as sea-foam, it is about as unsubstantial and evanescent. A breath may blow it away. A difference of opinion; your own too strongly expressed, even if coinciding with theirs; your friendship with the *Mustelas*; your difference with the *Vespas*; nay, nothing even so tangible as this—the very fact that you have been friends with them for a period long enough to weary them—breaks up the whole thing; and when you look for a recurrence of the old affectionate relations, or even for their continuance, you are met suddenly by a blank, and you leap into a hole, whence it is a question of the profoundest uncertainty when, or if ever, you will emerge. Perhaps never; certainly only when your friends have got tired of the estrangement, and wish for your return among them as the latest novelty they can devise.

VIII.

THE TRUEPENNIES.

The Truepennies and I have been friends for a great many years now. I say emphatically friends, with the full weight of the word in my mind; and I

mean what I say. I have never had an hour's coolness with them since I first knew them, some twenty years ago; and I never shall. For I hope I could do nothing so base and bad as would compel them to withdraw their esteem and regard; and I know that they would not quarrel with me on suspicion or misunderstanding. They never indeed, do quarrel with people. Not being of that rash kind which swears eternal friendship at a moment's notice, but proving before taking, they know what they are about in their affections; and, going softly and by degrees, do not come to grief as other people do. They never take up with folks merely out of that foolish kind of fancy which has no more roots than a mushroom; a fancy born of a pleasing manner and a plaintive smile, and dying almost as soon as born.

And they are friends for all weathers. They are not only for times of fair sailing, nor worshippers of suns rising or at the zenith; they go in for the cloudy days as well, and for the storms, and stand by their friends gallantly whatever befalls. They do not grow cold even under that touchstone, poverty. Yet they are not rash in their generousities. They have kept that poor old John Luckless we know many a time from the dogs; but they have not ministered to his improvidence, nor helped him to be absurd in his own expenditure. And though they have not embittered their benevolence by rebuke, nor taken out their percentage in preaching, still they have given the dear old imprudence good advice that has been of use to him, and they have contrived to help him more substantially than any one else has done.

The Tru pennies are about the
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most hospitable people I have ever known. This does not mean that they are remarkable for giving grand dinners and costly entertainments, which however come in their turn, as demanded by social exigencies; but they have a knack of making you feel at home in their house, and that you are not entertained so much as sharing. If you are sick or sad, you may find a place of refuge and rest with them for as long as you like. They grudge you nothing, not even that participation in their own family life and happiness which the exclusive guard so jealously from the lonely. They are tender to your troubles, though they do not make them worse by dwelling on them to you; flattering your sense of sorrow by way of being sympathetic, as so many do; but you feel and know that you do not weary them when you go with your tale of troubles, and that you may pour out your griefs into their hands, and they will hold them for you, and so far and for the time relieve you of them.

They do not flatter you like Amy Silvertongue, nor yet find everything you do wrong and bad like Odo Crossgraine. They are naturally disposed to see you in a favourable light, wishful to find their affection for you justified; but if your faults turn up they neither ignore them nor desert you. I do not say that they would not desert you if you were found out in anything very disgraceful. If you committed forgery of a specially bad kind—defrauded the poor, used your power as a trustee for helpless women and children to feather your own nest with their moss, or did anything else that implied selfish baseness and inherent rascality, then I think they would let you depart even without a God speed; but if your crime was one of sudden

temptation, and of weakness rather than wickedness, whatever worldly loss and social shame it involved, they would stand by you and do their best by their faithful love to restore you to your own self-esteem. I know they hold it as one of the cardinal points of friendship—to keep with the erring, so as not to add to the degradation which a man or woman, convicted of an offence, must suffer. They say that to spurn a sinner is only the way to make him still more a sinner; and that the loving recognition of a friend is the best cleansing agent while one is in the mire of disgrace that humanity can grant or receive. Yet they are people of so much strictness of counsel, they never let their love invade their own self-respect. They would not lend themselves to anything crooked or doubtful for your sake. However much they loved you they would not lie for you; and they would not do anything with the shadow of meanness on it for your good. They would not allow others to attack you undefended, even if you were in the wrong; for there is always a way of putting a wrong truthfully, and yet softening the lines; but they would sacrifice themselves in comfort and fortune to help you; but if you asked them to go a step beyond, into moral mud, you would find you had made a mistake.

This gives their friendship an enormous moral value in the world. People can never sneer at them as being 'tarred with the same stick,' and all that kind of thing, when they keep faithful to friends in disgrace. Every one knows that the Truepennies are as immaculate as the Mustelas themselves; perhaps more so; and that fidelity to the faulty does not mean with them likeness in the

fault, or indifference to its evil. Ah! many a poor shivering wretch, sinking beneath the waves of social disgrace, has been caught up by their strong hands and carried triumphantly to land once more. They have pulled more than one through 'the cloud' so many get under; and I look on them as the very hospital for sick reputations, where many a man and woman, who else would have gone lame and halting through society to the last, has been healed, and set firm and square before the world again—his little slip covered up, and his larger lapse boarded round and kept out of public view.

The Truepennies are people of that large, wholesome trust which does not need to be continually fed by assurances. They believe in you even when they do not see you, and they never quarrel with you on fancied slights and misunderstandings that have no existence save in the brain of the fancier. They are so sure of themselves, they do not need the props which to others are essential. Why should you be cool to them? why should you no longer care for them? They care for you just as much as they used; they have done nothing to offend you; you have done nothing to offend them; why, then, should there be a misunderstanding? And if there is no reason why, how then can it be at all? So they argue, consciously at times, generally however unconsciously; and the consequence is, they have none of those foolish tiffs and estrangements which embitter one's intercourse with the Vespas, and the Mustelas, and the Turner Vanes, all on their different grounds; but are emphatically people whom you find exactly where you left, and take up again at the very spot you left off.

They are people who want nothing of you but your love and confidence, and your esteem. And you—unless you are of the Luckless kind, or like another of my friends, of whom I have not spoken, Lachrymosa, who is always in distress of some sort—you want nothing of them but their love and confidence and esteem. And though they would go very far out of their way to serve you, and you also to serve them—yet it rarely if ever happens that you need do so; hence there is a placid pride of equality in your friendship that makes everything easy and delightful.

They do not however consider it absolutely necessary to always include their friends in all that goes on in their own lives. Thus, when my old chum and school-fellow Tom married, I think I told you he did not tell me. And he had his reasons, as I found afterwards. And if they are going to do anything very special and important, the chances are equal whether they take their friends into their confidence or not. It just depends. But if such people as the Vespas fire up and take offence, and talk of being left out in the cold, and that the requirements of friendship have been violated, and their mutual good

understanding endangered, and all that kind of thing, others, more steadfast and reliable in their own natures, accept the Truepenny action as sure to be right, whatever it is. And they always find in the end that if their friends have been more reticent than usual they have had ample justification.

In fact, the Truepenny family ranks as high in the moral world as it does in that of helpful, strong, and certain friendship. It is of no use to doubt them. You get nothing by it but your own foolish discomfiture when things resolve themselves. For these wise and self-respecting people do not trip. They have too firm a hand on the rails of both common sense and morality, and when they say a thing is so and so, we may be sure it is as they say, and that we shall find no flaws by future knowledge. I have no one I love better than the Truepennies. If they do not tickle my fancy they satisfy my heart; if they do not excite my poetic enthusiasm they nourish my very soul; and I ask no better award from fate than the continued affection of my faithful friends, and my own inner consciousness of deserving it.



THE ACTUAL CONDITION OF FRANCE.

ALTHOUGH we have heard so much about France and French affairs during the last two years, yet I do not think that your readers are even now quite bored—though I confess the subject is far from lively—or have lost all interest in a country, the capital of which under the Empire was fast becoming Anglo-French, just as it seems to me, since the fall of that dynasty, London—though for widely different reasons—has become Franco-English. Then men used to run over to Paris for pleasure—‘just to get over Sunday,’ and now if you mix in society or go into public places you will find a large proportion of Parisians come over for pleasure: yes, but more for safety. While on this subject, I may just tell you that the papers and many individuals who are forced to live in, or visit, Paris, frequently tell the wildest stories about the Paris of to-day. According to these selfish optimists the city and its social life are just the same as they were two years ago. Now I have inquired into this, and I find that it is simply nonsense. There are a good many Americans there, no doubt, but many of them had long leases of houses entered on when Paris was the American paradise, and many others are involved in what once promised to be lucrative business, and so ‘can’t get out.’ But all the foreigners—those wonderful Russians, Turks, Mexicans, and Greeks—have gone away, and, what is worse, have taken their money with them,—thinking that that and their lives are safer anywhere than in a city which totters on the edge of the crater of Communism. As for the English—the resident, money-spending English—it is only

necessary to walk down the Park, to see that they are all back in England. The actual state of affairs in the French capital was briefly summed up to me the other day, by two very old residents. Prince de M——, a diplomatist, and the lineal descendant of diplomatists, said, ‘Nobody will come there to stay. How can they, when it is so evident that a revolution is an affair of months, perhaps days?’ And Count M——e, son of a great statesman to whom we are indebted for a cold pudding, declared that ‘all Paris was sitting ready-dressed to run away, and with all its “effects” packed up.’ My private letters tell me the same true but unhappy story. Of course a few English go over to Paris; but I usually find them back at Long’s before the end of the week.

‘Had any fun?’

‘Oh, “comme ci comme ça!”—but you know it is not *our* Paris any longer.’

English as well as French are such ‘centralizers,’ and so habitually speak of the capital as if it was the country, that I hope this long revelation about Paris may be excused. ‘*Vae Victis!*’ is not a cry natural to European nations; on the contrary, there is usually great sympathy with the fallen. Such was the case with Italy in 1849; and, indeed, it is difficult to imagine a more moving scene than the father going into self-made exile, and the young heir—even after Novara—vowing that ‘*Italia sarà!*’ Great was the sympathy with the Danes (a few soldiers and sailors would perhaps have been more practically useful); and all Europe sorrowed with Austria after the fatal day of Sadowa. That England sympathised deeply and practically

with the French at the beginning of their reverses, was proved by the mission of Colonel Lloyd Lindsay, and by the great 'Mansion-House' fund; which latter was utterly paralysed by the very natural mistake of the Lord Mayor of London, thinking that the Maires of Paris were—like the Mayors of London—upright, just, and good men of business. We, who had been under their hands during the siege, knew better! If ever pearls were cast before swine, it was then.* Nor, I grieve to say, did these good gifts call forth the great gratitude which might have been expected. They took them, but they hated them, as they came from England. But on this occasion the British sympathy quickly drooped in an unusual manner. Two things disgusted the English, who dislike ingratitude, and laugh at words which are only words—they were displeased, these lovers of fair play, at the rapid manner in which the French turned against an Emperor who had been their idol for eighteen years, and accused him of causing all the evils which had fallen on France through a war into which they themselves had forced him; and they set their straightforward faces against the incessant bragging and boasting which, bad enough during the siege—Jules Favre being one of the loudest talkers—has been even worse in the mouths of ministers and deputies. A French gentleman said, only yesterday, 'Yes—it serves us right. We talk so loud that nobody believes us.' Even Thiers

* There was ill luck against the whole affair. Colonel Lloyd Lindsay was arrested by the blundering Republicans for a Prussian spy; and many of the 'Fund' goods never arrived. In July (1871) I was asked by an employé of the Great Northern of France, if I wanted to buy new potatoes? 'Because,' said he, 'we have truck loads of the old potatoes sent from London, and they are sprouting out wonderfully.'

began to boast of his army, till Bismarck warned him to desist.

The amended treaty which followed the Imperial Chancellor's gentle hint is one of Thiers' deceptions. It is hardly withdrawing from a country, if you merely retire your men into another occupied province, and so there double the army of occupation at the expense of the beaten nation.

But is not Thiers the incarnation of deception? A notorious Orleanist, he turns from his clients—to whom he owes some reparation for having caused the fall of their dynasty—and becomes a Republican. Detesting the 'Left' of the Chamber, he goes bodily over to them. Hating Gambetta, he courts him; and he passes daily the most unpopular bills, under the very empty threat of 'resignation.'

Depend on it, 'the little go-between' (siege language) will never resign till the day when he will of necessity take 'Resurgam' for his motto.

But what can we say of a parliament that is content to be ruled over by an old and peevish tyrant? By-the-bye, one of the greatest objections to Napoleon III. was his age. Now the little President is at least ten years older, and all France swears he is in the prime of life. His Excellency Lord Lyons is said to have thus summed up Thiers:

'A wonderful man—but a wonderful old man!'

The Chamber is divided into a series of small groups, who only agree in differing with one another; and so Thiers has only to buy over one of the strongest of these cliques to carry any proposed measure.

Every now and then the 'Right,' and the 'Right Centre' do join and ask unpleasant questions, and insist on perilous explanations; then arises Thiers, in his wrath, and

says, 'Don't be childish, asking questions. I know what is best for you; and if you are not good, I'll run away and leave you.' Next day they are good boys, all voting for Thiers *en masse*, and he feels certain of a prolonged tenure of his dearly beloved power.

M. Thiers, too, expresses his opinion of members who venture to entertain opinions of their own, in language (to quote Whyte Melville) 'more pagan than parliamentary.' For instance, when a deputy of talent and influence rose to oppose him, the President of the Republic turned to the 'Right,' and asked, 'Why don't you put up a man with some sense in his head?' In any other legislative assembly, he would have been called to order; but what can you expect of a Chamber in which such language as the following escapes without notice:

'You lead your men into action. You! Why, you were never in front of your men except when they were running away.'

In fact the Chamber of Versailles is a bear-garden, and in it there is no party, and hardly one man, who has the courage of his opinions. M. Thiers has just played out his highest trump card, the Loan. It will be covered at once, and that will be quoted as a proof of the prosperity of France. Any one who knows anything of French loans will be aware that this view is simply fallacious. But once the Loan is launched, freedom of opinion, and the expression of it, are restored to the Deputies, and next session may witness discussions that may drive Thiers from the Presidential chair. And then what will happen?—great disturbances—perhaps civil war. M. Thiers has said that France has more princes than places for them. And what are their chances? The Legiti-

mists are still sanguine over their impossible chances, though one of their most devoted adherents told me recently that they fully expected another 'Commune' first. The Orleanists have no chance now, if they ever had one, and the Emperor is playing a waiting game. 'I will never go back,' said Napoleon III., 'unless I am asked; and not then, unless I am sure of a strong military government: without which no man can rule France.' Such being the case, I think there is nothing left but Gambetta and a Commune, probably a shade less hateful than that created by the cowardice and hesitation of M. Thiers. The present Government does not dare, for Imperial reasons, to face a plebiscite. They stifle the 'Vox populi' just as at the reviews they forbid the troops to make the usual noisy demonstration when they 'march past,' for fear the cry should be 'Vive l'Empereur!' M. Gambetta will wait for no plebiscite; he will *take* power; and there are plenty of Communists left in Belleville. Felix Pyat is in London, and Rochefort will be at Brussels 'by the just clemency of M. Thiers.' This I quote on the authority of a Paris paper; but it does not matter, if true or not, as the first effect of the advent of M. Gambetta to power would be a free pardon to all the Communist prisoners.

The ex-Dictator, who 'doubled all our troubles and all our expenses,' is an ambitious, unscrupulous man, bloodthirsty after the power he has once tasted; and he is resolved at any price to have his turn at ruling his country. Thiers may cling to power till he dies, but he may be compelled to resign. In either case Europe must be prepared to witness a 'Coup de Commune,' the result of which will be to

make Gambetta President, and then in a few months to let loose the dogs of civil war. The 'Commune' will last a few months, perhaps, and will probably burn down Paris when it falls. Every other party will be against it; but, unluckily, it is as strong as any one isolated party, and no two parties will sink their private grievances and join to put it down.

We shall be told that all depends on the army. But with whom is the sympathy of the army? I can assure you, that the feelings half hidden, half expressed of both officers and men, are satisfactory neither to Thiers, to Legitimist, Orleanist, or Republican, Moderate or *Red*; and this is one of the ugliest features in the actual condition of France.

The administration of justice must always be considered as a test of the sound state of a country. In France the legal system seems to be utterly and entirely unhinged. Civil justice is almost swallowed up in martial law; and this is a terror to natives, and should be a warning to visitors. Bazaine's trial is simply a persecution if Trochu, Jules Favre, and perhaps Thiers, are not tried for giving up Paris. Poor marshal! I believe he is no more guilty than were the Danish generals when crushed by Prussia; but that is no reason that he will not be shot. The general opinion is, that if he had been tried at once when the 'Affaire Bazaine' was the topic of the day, he would have been shot off hand, guilty or not; but he is 'out of fashion'—*rococo* now, and being forgotten will be pardoned for crimes of which he is quite innocent. This is the *on dit* of Paris.

But I have another fear for the poor marshal. Thiers must,

I think, shoot him; for if, after months of prison and legal torture, he comes forth innocent, the army, which is inspired with a sense of rough justice, and has a sneaking affection for Imperial marshals, will cry out against the prolonged injustice.

I will only allude in passing to the trials of the wretched Communists. After fourteen months of dire delay they are even now being shot in weekly batches. The greater part of the most dangerous have escaped, and every execution enormously increases the very strong body of Communists already vowing vengeance, when their time comes, in Belleville and Montmartre.

The trial of Arbinot, accused of being a Prussian spy, was another specimen of military justice! A Pole, with no authority, telegraphs to one of the Gambetta generals—'*Arbinot is a spy—identify him, and shoot him to-day.*'

This the general does, *sans mot dire*. I believe the man to have been no spy, only that pure type of the Frenchman of 1872, a conceited boaster; but if he had been ten times a spy, they might at least have gone through the form of a trial. The Pole and the general were found guilty, and sentenced to—what do you think?—'One month's imprisonment, and to pay the costs.' Not dear for legal murder, is it? So much for law under the virtuous Republic, which has Thiers for its Head, and the 'Reds' for its 'tail.'

M. Thiers's anti-free-trade measures, too, have not added to the pleasantry or security of France as a residence. There exists great ill-feeling at all the trading ports, especially at those connected with the timber trade, and unknowingly as unwillingly the President of the Republic has created a strong

Imperial reaction among a class which was said to be opposed to the Imperial dynasty. There again disturbance looms in the future.

In looking at France, as it is to-day, we must not pass over one truth. It is said that ever with the hour comes the man; but it is a curious fact that the extraordinary events which have happened in France since the 4th of September, 1870, have not produced *one man*—soldier or politician. In the great Revolution, generals cropped up in the ranks after every great action, and there the great intellect of Napoleon—who, save as a soldier, was never so practically clever as Napoleon III.—towered over Europe, but now not an individuality; and even the few men who have really fought have been foreigners. Further than this, you must remember that the 4th of September sent all the Imperial generals into disgrace, and all the men of talent into exile. Rouher, the cleverest man in France, is not allowed to speak.

It is from such facts as these that the state of a country must be judged, not from official organs

or biased correspondents. She will see that, though I do not believe in the theory of the decay of the Latin race, I view the actual condition of France from the most gloomy point. And how is it to end?

I am a great Imperialist, but I dare not hope to see the restoration of the Emperor; yet I fancy sometimes that I see, as in a vision, France, torn and distracted by a long civil war, turning to the Imperial dynasty for aid in that time of trouble, and, the prayer being heard, the young scion of that dynasty once more ascending the throne of its great founder. May it be so! is my prayer, and should be that of France.

I do not believe that I have the least exaggerated the existing state of affairs in unhappy France, the 'black spots' on whose horizon have swollen into dense loaded clouds. I believe, indeed, that I am within the limits of strict truth, and therefore I say that it is no wonder if so many natives as well as foreigners have come to the conclusion, that *La Belle France* 'is a charming country to live out of.'





OLD MARIE.

IN THE NORMAN LAND.

BY HENRY BLACKBURN.



HAT 'the world is growing old' is no new saying, but it comes to us with a new and unaccustomed force to-day. Here is Marie—dear little Marie, our hostess's daughter, whom we remember as it were only yesterday, playing about on the 'place' at Avranches in Normandy, a child of five years old — seated to-night on the *terrace* with the bloom of nineteen summers and the gravity of forty, sighing and mourning for a lost love in a past war; just as the grand old woman that we have sketched in the fish-market at Mont St. Michel (the island we see across the bay, in our first illustration) knits and mourns over long past, and nearly forgotten, griefs and wars.

The young Marie thinking of the days 'only yesterday' when Jean, her Jean, went off in hopeful pride 'à Berlin,' marching to the tune of 'Le jeune et beau Dunois;' and now, of all that she has left her after the 'accursed year,' all to remember him by—a little scrap of comfort on a piece of paper an inch square, drifted out of Paris on a *ballon monté* careering before the north-east wind—telling

her of the last days of the siege of Paris.

The old Marie knitting and mourning, thinking of the picturesque and brave old days when battles were fought face to face, and with the strong arm—not behind screens as in these times, when bravery seems to consist of so many grains of powder let loose by system—thinking of revolutions, too, the one topic of women old and young. What a contrast between old and young France!—young France in Manchester 'Dolly Varden' costume, Watteau hat, and high shoes, working with a silent sewing machine at some mysterious article of attire, or studying the latest copy of the 'Journal des Demoiselles;' and old France, in white cap, dark blue serge, and wooden shoes, knitting a stocking, sighing and sleeping.

There is peace to-night as the moon shines down upon our *terrace*—peace that we have scarcely felt before for two long years. We, residents at Avranches—English and French living fraternally together—have been spared the storm, but we have heard the thunder from afar. We have never felt secure; just as we have seen the clouds on the calmest summer night gather round our promontory

and burst over our heads with a deluge of rain, so have we daily expected the storm of war to reach our Norman home.

But we are not to speak of wars, new or old, but rather to remind English readers that once more the most beautiful part of France is open to travellers, and to suggest a tour in Normandy to them, taking in, as the furthestmost point from England, the little town of Avranches, from which these lines are written. There are some places in Europe which English people seem with one consent to have made their own; taking possession peacefully enough it is true, but with a determination that the inhabitants find it impossible to re-

sist. Thus it is that Avranches, owing to its healthiness and cheapness of living, and to the extreme beauty of its situation, has become almost like an English country town. Built upon the extreme western promontory of the long line of hills which extend from Domfront and the forest of Audaine, with a view unsurpassed in extent towards the sea, with environs of undulating hills and fruitful landscape; with woods and streams (such as the traveller who has only seen eastern France could hardly imagine), we can scarcely picture a more favoured spot, nor suggest a more delightful halting-place in the tour of Normandy.

The reader may naturally think



that a French town turned into an English one is the last place that he would care to see; but the natural beauty of its situation, and the fact of its being the starting-point for Mont St. Michel, will be sure to attract him thither.

The only way to see Normandy is to go through it quietly, peacefully, and economically—*how* economically we may as well state at the outset. The traveller coming from England, and making Dieppe or Havre his starting-point, may visit all the towns, shown on the

map for *less than two pounds*; and a month's tour, including all expenses to and from London, need not exceed twenty pounds.* But to do this he must not be tempted to 'take a run' to Paris on the one hand, or to pay more than a flying visit to Trouville on the other. He must make up his mind to take a holiday in the true sense of the

* For the details of this route we must refer the reader to 'Normandy Picturesque,' Travelling Edition (London, S. Low and Co.), from which some of these notes are taken.

word, to travel where there is no hurry, no extravagance, and few of the worries of life. He will drop down quietly amongst a primitive peace-loving people, who do not live at high pressure, and still have time to be quaint. He will walk down streets of houses covered with carved woodwork that look like pieces of furniture brought out of Wardour Street; he will see cathedrals so grand and perfect in design, that they have served as copies for generations of architects down to the present day. He will see remnants of old costume, and customs unaltered by time.

Starting from Havre by steam-boat for a little unknown town on the river Rille, called Pont-Audemer, situated about six miles south of Quillebeuf and eight from Honfleur, the traveller, who has paid two francs for the journey, will make his first halt at an old-fashioned inn, called the 'Pot d'Étain.' Spending a day in examining the curious old houses and tanneries and climbing the hill above the town, he may go leisurely on in the evening, by railway and diligence, to the famous old town of Lisieux, twenty-two miles away.

If we approach Lisieux by the road from Pont-Audemer, we shall get a better impression of the town than if riding on the whirlwind of an express train; and we shall pass through a prettily wooded country, studded with villas and comfortable-looking houses, the modern abodes of wealthy manufacturers and bourgeois. We ought to come quietly through the suburbs of the town, if only to see how its thirteen thousand inhabitants are busied in their woollen and cloth factories; how they have turned the old timber-framed houses of feudal times into warehouses; how the banners and signs of chivalry are desecrated into trade-marks,

and how its inhabitants are devoting themselves heart and soul to the arts of peace.

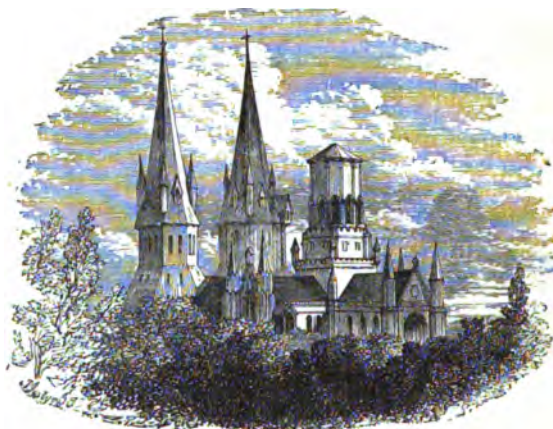
It is here in Lisieux that the delight and charm of a journey through Normandy begins to open out before him. At Lisieux (as, indeed, at the little town of Pont-Audemer) he comes face to face with the domestic Gothic of the middle ages, and can trace on the time-worn buildings the handiwork of a past age. So quaint and curious are the oak carvings on some of the houses, and so picturesque the aspect of this town, that a week may well be spent in exploring it, and sketching the strange devices on the walls. So few artists have come here, in spite of its accessibility, that we would repeat a suggestion that we have made elsewhere, that 'now or never' is the time to come. In a few years there will be little left of old Lisieux as Prout sketched it, and as the authoress of 'La Belle France' knew it, when she wrote—'Oh the pleasant days, when men built houses after their own minds, and wrote their own devices on the walls, and none laughed at them; when little wooden knights and saints peeped out from the angles of gable-ended houses, and every street displayed a store of imaginative wealth.' The old fashion is fast giving place to the new.

Continuing our journey, we next come to Caen and Bayeux, where the interest changes suddenly from old buildings of wood to those of stone; where, as the reader knows, some of the noble Norman churches of the time of William the Conqueror are to be found in wonderful preservation.

'These two royal abbeys,' writes Dawson Turner, 'which have fortunately escaped the storm of Revolution, are still an ornament to the town, an honour to the sovereign who caused them to be

erected, and to the artist who produced them. Both edifices rose at the same time, and from the same motive. William the Conqueror, by his union with Matilda, had contracted a marriage proscribed by the decrees of consanguinity. The clergy, and especially the Archbishop of Rouen, inveighed against the union, and the Pope issued an injunction that the royal pair should erect two monasteries by way of penance. In obedience to this command, William founded the Church of St. Stephen, and Matilda, the Church of the Holy Trinity.'

The contemplation of these two monuments may suggest a comparison between two other monuments that have lately been erected in London,—viz., the Albert Memorial and the Albert Hall. These costly monuments, the old and the new, stand, as it were, at the two extremities of a long line of kings—a line commencing with 'William the Bold,' and ending with 'Albert the Good;' the earlier monuments dedicated to Religion, the latter to Science and Art—the first to commemorate a warrior, the latter a man of peace—the first endurable through many ages,



BAYEUX CATHEDRAL.

the latter probably destructible in a few years.

Caen, with its bustle and business aspect, is less in harmony with its monuments than the neighbouring town of Bayeux, where all is repose. Having visited the 'royal abbeys' with their outlines standing as clear and sharp against the sky as they did eight hundred years ago, and admired the beautiful proportions and grace of line of the tower of St. Pierre, and having spent a week it may be, in exploring the town and neighbourhood, the traveller will turn with a sense of

rest to the quiet old cathedral town of Bayeux.

The approach to Bayeux from the west by the old road is always striking, and it is from this side, where we sat down to make our sketch, that the grandeur of its cathedral towers are best seen.

The repose—the solemnity we might almost call it—that pervades Bayeux even in this nineteenth century, is the first thing that strikes a stranger; a repose the more solemn and mysterious when we think of its rude history

of wars, pillage, and massacre, and of its destruction more than once by fire and sword. From the days when this town consisted of a few rude huts (in the time of the Celts), all through the splendour of the times of the Norman dukes, and the more terrible days of the Reformation, it is prominent in history; but Bayeux is now a place of quiet industry, with about ten thousand inhabitants,—‘a dull ecclesiastical city,’ as the guide books express it, with an aspect almost as peaceful and undisturbed as a cathedral close, or Walker’s ‘Harbour of Refuge,’ in the gallery of the Royal Academy. There are a few paved streets, with *cafés* and shops as usual, but the most industrious inhabitants appear to be lace-makers—women seated at the doorways of the old houses, wearing the quaint horse-shoe comb and a cap with fan-like frill peculiar to Bayeux, or dressed simply and tidily like the old woman in our illustration. Every building of importance has a semi-ecclesiastical character; this feeling seeming to have especially pervaded the designers of the thirteenth-century houses, the architects appearing to have aimed at expressing their love and admiration for the great cathedral, and to have emulated the Gothic character of its decorations. Even the principal inn, the *Hôtel du Luxembourg*, partakes of the quiet air of the place; the walls of the *salle à manger* are covered with pictures of saints and martyrs, and the houses we can see from its windows are built and carved in stone.

But we must not dwell further upon the curious aspect of Bayeux; the visitor who comes to see the cathedral and the famous ‘tapestries’ will do well not to hurry away, at least not until the wonderful beauty of the cathedral spires have

impressed themselves on his mind. There are a few things—as, in painting, the composition of Raphael’s ‘Holy Family,’ and, as in architecture, the curve of the dome of St. Paul’s cathedral in London—which, like the spires of the cathedral at Bayeux, are perfect and right, and leave an abiding sense of beauty and fitness on the mind of the spectator.

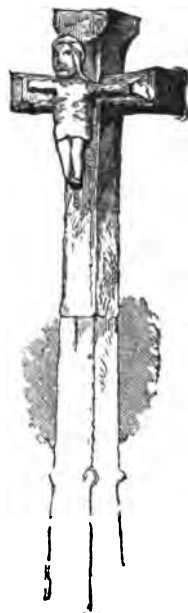
On our way (as indicated on the map) to St. Lo, Coutances, and Granville, on the western coast of Normandy, we may do well—if we are interested in the appliances of modern warfare, and would obtain any idea of the magnificence of the French Marine—to see something of Cherbourg; but we can scarcely recommend this detour to the traveller unless he has special reasons for a visit; we would rather take him to see the cathedral at Coutances, and so on to the bold rock-bound coast of Granville. This last is a pleasant and favourable spot in which to rest, and to study, if we please, the manners and customs of a seafaring people. The fisherwomen of Granville are famed for their beauty, industry, and courage. The women do everything here; the ‘boatmen’ are women, and the ‘fishermen’ young girls. And we may well admire some of these handsome Granvillaises, living their free life by the sea, earning less in the day, generally, than our Staffordshire pit-girls, but living much more enviable lives. Here they are by hundreds, scattered over the beach in the early morning, and afterwards crowding into the market-place, driving hard bargains for the produce of their sea-farms, and—with rather shrill and unpronounceable ejaculations—handing over their shining wares.

From Granville to Avranches, is a diligence journey of sixteen miles, through a not uninterest-

ing country. The tourist comes hither naturally on his way to Mont St. Michel, the island rock once a prison now a convent, surmounted by a Gothic church, nearly 400 feet above the level of the sea, and with a little fishing village at its base—its streets washed on stormy days by the Atlantic waves. The visit is made in a day from Avranches, returning the same evening; and Murray gives a complete account of the wonders of the island. We who see it daily, in sunshine and in storm, who are accustomed to clothe it with the romance of history, like the clouds which ever surround it, have little sympathy, it may be, for the stream of noisy visitors who rattle across the sands at low tide to visit the Mount; but it is a wonderful place, and those who are sketching a tour in Normandy, are bound to point this out as one of the principal places to visit.

Turning homeward—eastward, the traveller will go by easy stages by diligence and railway, through Vire and the world-famed Falaise, to Rouen. It is worth while to keep to the road wherever we can, or we shall miss the sight of some curious and interesting relics that abound in this part of the country. On the road near Avranches we sat down one day to make a sketch of a cross (A.D. 1066), that we have shown in our illustration. Whilst we are sketching there comes up an old *cantonnier* in blouse and heavy sabots, who has just returned from mending the roads, and kneels down to pray. The old man is all absorbed, he sees nothing but the hideous cross; he has no eyes apparently for the beauty of the landscape, no ear for the voices of Nature; he is heedless of passers-by, and heedless also of the fact that he forms part of one of those simple scenes of rustic

life which are every day becoming more rare.



ANCIENT CROSS NEAR AVRANCHES.

After visiting Falaise, which our readers should by no means omit to see, it may be found more convenient to take the railway to Rouen, visiting Evreux and other towns on the way, if possible.

Historic Rouen is so well known to travellers, that there is little left to be said. We will not dwell upon old Rouen, but will rather indicate to the reader what it is like to-day, and how modern and prosaic is its aspect; how we arrive by express train and are rattled through wide-paved streets in an *omnibus du chemin de fer*, and are set down at a 'grand hôtel,' where we find an Englishman seated in the doorway reading 'Bell's Life.' The city of to-day is given up to commerce, to the swinging of cranes, and to the screeching of locomotives on the quays; whilst the fine broad streets and lines of newly-erected houses, shut out

from our view the old city of which we have heard so much. Rouen the picturesque is disappearing like a dissolving view—a few more slides in the magic-lantern, a few more windows of plate glass in its modern streets, and the picture of old Rouen fades away.

The cathedral of Notre Dame, and the magnificent church of St. Ouen, are the prominent objects of interest to the traveller and are alone worth coming to Rouen to see; but of the city which Prout and Pugin sketched, the city of Joan of Arc, there is little to be found without searching beyond the lines marked out by guides and *valets de place*.

If we should be permitted a hearing in the gay and festive pages of 'London Society,' we should like to take the reader—who has 'done the sights' of Rouen, who has bought all the photographs and nicknacks in the shops on the quay, and lounged in the *cafés* to his heart's content—to see the 'bits' of curious old wood-work in courts and alleys, standing firm and strong, where the very stones that should have supported them have crumbled away. We would point out the fine large grain of this oak-work, so difficult to meet with in these days, as connoisseurs are aware; but, above all, we should notice the curious heraldic signs and emblems with a history over almost every doorway. Memories of weeks of almost romantic interest, spent in the byways of Rouen, crowd upon us as we write these lines, and we feel inclined to cry out, as Mr. Sala did from Algeria, 'Why don't you come out here, you great British public,' and see these things before they fade for ever from your eyes.

It is a Sunday morning in Rouen—a peaceful summer morning, when the most catholic

Goddess of Leisure 'tells her beads,'—when the good, well-ordered people of Rouen string themselves in rows, one by one on the public seats in the gardens, and in what we should call the churchyard of the grand cathedral of St. Ouen. It is to hear a great preacher, that the crowd are collecting in such numbers that it is difficult to make our way through the green baize door into the cathedral, where the faithful are receiving, with bowed head and crossed breast, the holy water administered with a brush. We pay two sous for a chair, and take our places under the usual fire of silent criticism from our neighbours, who, as they kneel, dart the most searching glances at us; and we have scarcely time to notice the beautiful proportions of the nave, and the carving in the chapels, when the service commences, and we can just discern in the distance the priests at the high altar (looking in their bright stiff robes, and with their backs to the people, like golden beetles under a microscope); we cannot hear distinctly, for the moving of the crowd about us, the creaking of chairs, and the whispering of many voices, but we can see the incense rising, the children in white robes swinging silver chains, and the cocked hat of the tall 'Suisse' moving to and fro. Presently the congregation sits down, the organ peals forth, and a choir of sweet voices chants the 'Agnus Dei.' Again the congregation kneels to the sound of a silver bell; the smoke of incense curls through the aisles, and the golden beetles move up and down; again there is a scraping of chairs, a shuffling of feet, and a general movement towards the pulpit, the men standing in groups round it with their hats in their hands; then a pause, and for the first time

so deep a silence that we can hear the movement of the crowd outside, and the distant rattle of drums. But all eyes are now turned to the preacher, a man of about forty, of an austere but ordinary (we might almost say low) type of face, closely shaven, with an ivory crucifix at his side, and a small black book in his hand. His voice was powerful, almost too loud sometimes, and most persuasive; he was eloquent and impassioned, but used little gesture, or any artifice to engage attention. He commenced with a rhapsody—startling in the sudden flow of its eloquence, thrilling in its higher tones, tender and compassionate almost to tears, in its lower passages—a rhapsody to the Virgin; and then an appeal for us ‘true Catholics’ to the ‘Queen of Heaven,’ the beautiful, the adorable. He elevated our hearts with his moving voice, and by what we might call the electricity of sympathy, almost to a frenzy of adoration; he taught us how the true believer, ‘clad in hope,’ would one day be ‘crowned with fruition.’ He lingered with almost idolatrous emphasis on the charms of Mary, and with his enraptured eyes fixed upon her image, and a thousand upturned faces listening to his words, the aisles echoed to his romantic theme—

‘With my lips I kneel, and with my heart

I fall about thy feet and worship thee.’

A stream of eloquence followed—studied or spontaneous it matters not; the whole congregation held their breath and listened—as they scarcely ever listen in an English church—to a story for the thousandth time repeated.

With a transition almost as startling as the first, the book is closed, the preacher has left the pulpit; the congregation has dispersed, and the day is ended with fireworks

and fêtes. But—and this appeared to us to be the moral of it all—the service was solemn and the sermon was effective, because the preacher had, naturally or by training, both in manner and in matter, the *art of preaching*. He had not that curious surprised (*distrain*) manner, with which so many English preachers seem possessed on entering the pulpit, and his sermon was not, as a writer quaintly puts it, ‘based upon the supposition that the preacher is introducing Christianity for the first time, to the notice of his hearers.’

Leaving Rouen, we can, if we please, reach Havre or Dieppe in about two hours, or go down the Seine by steamboat; but it is a pleasanter thing to pass homeward leisurely through this ‘food-producing land,’ to go from village to village, and to see something of the country life of Normandy—to see the laden orchards, the cattle upon the hills, and the sloping fields of corn. It is yet early in the autumn, but the variety of colour spread over the landscape is delightful to the eye; the rich brown of the buckwheat, the bright yellow mustard, the green pastures by rivers, and the poppies in the corn; the fields divided by high hedges and dispersed by mellowed trees, the purple heath, the luxuriant fern. It is harvest-time everywhere, and the people have evidently but one thought, ‘the gathering in;’ the country presents to us a picture, not like Watteau’s *fêtes galantes*, but rather that of a peaceful English harvest home. We are in the midst of corn-fields now, near Villers-sur-Mer, and the hill-side is altogether glorious. It is covered to the very summit with riches; the heavily-laden corn stems wave their crests against a blue horizon, whilst in a deep cleft a long line of poppies winds downwards in a scarlet

stream. The flowers are set thickly in some places and form a blaze of colour, inconceivably, painfully brilliant. We could not paint it if we would, but we may see in it an allegory of plenty and of peace (of that peace which France so urgently desires); we may see her blood-red banner of war laid down to garland the hill-side with its crimson folds, her children laying their offerings at the feet of Ceres and forgetting Mars altogether!

Here the traveller, who has been making the little tour in Normandy that we have sketched out for him, arrives again at the coast, where he may take the boat from Havre to England; or, if otherwise inclined, can visit the 'happy hunting grounds' of Trou-

ville and Deauville, or the more picturesque and bracing little town of Etretât, with its rocks and caves and its summer population of Parisiennes disporting themselves by the sea.

* * * *

It is past midnight now at Avranches, and the young Marie and the old are in deeper dreams. The moon is shining full across the bay and silvering the rocks on Mont St. Michel; the night diligence is jingling down the hill, and the owls are shuffling in the ivy on the wall. How is it, we wonder, that English travellers know so little of these spots—so quaint, so beautiful, so near home and so like home?



MOEL FAMMAU.

I HAD been staying in Denbigh for some weeks to read. My coach, a Jesus' man, as all Welshmen are, had gone up to Oxford from a grammar-school in the county, as poor as a rat, had acquitted himself while at the University with so much credit that he not only gathered to himself for his maintenance all the Joshuan emoluments open to him, but even the University scholarships and prizes fell at his feet. Alma Mater was proud of him; and when he took a degree, answering to the highest expectations of everyone, the brightest prospects seemed open before him. But no. After flying sublimely through the schools, he chose once again to seek his mountain land, where a mountain lassie was waiting for him, and opened a school in his own county-town with hope, love, and patience as his only guarantees of success. At the time I knew him he had realized a very comfortable competency, and though his wife for years had been sleeping the long sleep, she had left him two most perfect daughters, Nelly and Beatrice, maidens, I cannot describe, and of whom I shall have to say but little, though one was the motive power in the day's scramble I am going to relate.

I had two rooms in old Price's house, perched up aloft all by themselves above the rest of the building. They were not garrets, however, by any means; but comfortable, old-fashioned, good-sized, well-furnished rooms; I am afraid I have been rather free in the use of my epithets, but my diggings really did deserve every good word

I can say of them. In the morning when I woke I could see the line of Flintshire hills, blue with heather, against the shining sky; and when I opened my Aristotle, and lit a cigar, the same hills met me from a different point of view, as often as I raised my eyes from the Greek of the ethics to turn to my crib, or to the ponderous Liddell and Scott which lay open in front of me, or—shall I confess it?—to lean over my table and peep down into the garden below to catch a glimpse of Nelly, as she walked to and fro along the shady walk by the house wall, directly beneath me, whence now and then the musical tones of her voice came pealing upwards, as a snatch of some favourite song came into her memory while she read and walked.]

I found her in the drawing-room one evening with her book of ferns open before her. Now I know as much about ferns as I do about jute or indigo. I think ferns very delightful in a natural grotto, when it is not too damp; I think a fernery is very pretty when it is tastefully arranged and well kept; and I admire the gorgeous productions of the scenic artist which he places before us as a *pièce de resistance* to his ballet and his coloured fire at Christmas. But Nelly's book! The Latin names were doubly Latin to me, and the English names as bad as Greek. Judge then the state of consternation into which I was thrown when my companion, turning to a blank page of the book, said:—

'I am keeping this for the *Os-munda Regalis*. Beatrice has had

a specimen for some time, and I have been waiting more than two years. Will you take the trouble to get one for me, Mr. Lumley?"

"I would take any trouble for you. You shall have a specimen as soon as I get back to town. Let me see. This is Thursday, and I start on Saturday."

"What a goose you are! Do you suppose that it grows in Hyde Park, or that I want my book enriched from Covent Garden? No, I must have the fern while you are here, and it only grows in one place in the neighbourhood, in a little ravine on the side of Moel Fammau. Will you get it for me?"

Moel Fammau, 'the mother of the hills,' was the highest and the bluest of the mountain range I have mentioned. I had often thought of devoting a day to climbing it, before Nelly's fern mania brought the matter to a positive issue.

"Of course I will go to Moel Fammau for you, or to the world's end, if you like; but how am I to tell this fern from the numberless others which no doubt grow in the same place?"

"It will be the largest fern there. Sometimes it grows nine feet high, but I think not in this neighbourhood. The fronds grow in large tufts from a thick, woody rhizoma, and——"

"Thanks," I interrupted, "I shall know it perfectly by the first part of your description. I shall look out for the largest fern in the gully, and bring you that."

"When will you go?"

"To-morrow. It is my only day."

I went up to my room, and began to pack my books, half pleased, half amused, and half vexed at the programme laid out for my last day in Denbigh, when a lucky thought came into my head. I would ask James Rawdon

to accompany me. He was not quite the companion I should have chosen, for he had a queer habit of saying untoward things out of season, and I did not consider my acquaintance with him of sufficient standing to justify the interest he always took in my affairs. He was a young man of six or seven and twenty, a clergyman, and the son of a Scotch baronet, but somehow he had quarrelled with his bride the church, and was living a life of idleness, quietly irregular, fishing all day, and spending his evenings by his own fireside with his pipe and whisky-toddy. But he was the only acquaintance I had in the place, so I sent him a note, asking him to meet me at the station at ten the following morning, and was relieved when I received a reply in the affirmative.

I went to bed that night to dream confused dreams of Royal Osmunds, Nellies, Moel Fammaus, and Rawdons. I imagined I was going like a caricature of 'Jack-in-the-green,' to present a gigantic fern, twice my own height, to a princess on the top of a mountain, while Rawdon goaded me on with his fishing-rod as often as I staggered beneath the weight of my burden, or my pace became too slow; or I thought that I was bird-nesting, and climbing to the top of *somewhere* by means of a ladder of fern-leaf. And that horrid Rawdon was always there with his fishing-rod.

How I began to hate that fishing-rod in my dream! And when I saw the veritable instrument of torture itself waved to me as a signal from the door of the book-ing-office, I could have snatched it away and sent it flying up Vale Street with the greatest pleasure. Rawdon stood there in his usual costume, a suit of the coarsest tweed, and a tall felt hat, which

did not prevent you from seeing that he wore his hair in the pound-of-candles style. His rod and fishing-basket, with a clerical tie, completed his attire. He had been waiting half-an-hour for me, he said. I could not help thinking that he had better have devoted it to his toilet, but there was no time to waste, so I was prevented from the rudeness of telling him so.

Going into the station Rawdon took the lead. 'Two first-class tickets for Rheul,'—then turning to me, 'you can pay for both; I will settle with you afterwards.' We were soon in the train, and a short journey brought us to Rheul, the nearest village to the foot of Moel Fammau. We turned into the village inn—there are village inns still remaining in Wales, outside the tourist districts—to refresh ourselves, and inquire the best way up the mountain, when my friend discovered that he was unprovided with tobacco for the day's consumption. I had brought out a fat case of cigars, but the canny Scotchman would smoke nothing but a short pipe, which he carried as though it were a rose, in the button-hole of his coat.

'I must have some tobacco by some means,' he said, 'and plenty of it. Suppose we buy up all they have in the house, and astonish the natives. You can pay for it, and I will settle with you afterwards.'

It turned out that the good woman of the house had about two pounds of tobacco wrapped up in little papers—each paper a pennyworth. In spite of my protestations, Rawdon emptied the whole drawerful into his basket, quite contentedly, and went whistling out of the house while I paid his bill and our score.

'Turn to the left past the parsonage and the big brick house

you'll see, and it 'll be clear to you when to turn off the road.' These were the directions of our hostess, delivered with a strong Welsh accent, and, following them, we soon found ourselves toiling up the side of Moel Fammau.

There is something very exhilarating in leaving the high road and striking across country, and especially there is something particularly buoyant to the spirits in climbing a hill. Of course there are hills and hilla. You would find it very wearisome to toil up the pass of Llanberis in the dark; and I know a hill in Derbyshire, on the turnpike road, which I have to climb sometimes, and am always more dead than alive on reaching the top. But this is different to mountain climbing on a fine clear day, with a fresh breeze strengthening every step you take upwards, and begging you to buffet with it in such a free and hearty manner, that you enjoy the labour and perseverance you are compelled to exercise. To leave the road, cross a field or two, climb a wall, and then discover there are no more walls before you; and presently to find the grass growing shorter and sweeter, and that you have to pick your way among boulder-stones and gorse bushes, while now and then you set your foot into the middle of a clump of heather, and at last after wading knee deep in heather bloom for half a mile, to strike suddenly upon a solitary sheep path, and to follow it round the mountain without caring much whether it brings you nearer to the top or not—what a fund of delight and wholesome recreation there is for a young and healthy man in all this. For the first hour or so the ascent was easy enough, and we kept well together, my chief care being to keep to windward of Rawdon, who

gave the smoke of his bad tobacco to the breezes in such enormous clouds, that I, a smoker, could not stand it. But it presently became more difficult, and the fishing-rod and cutty pipe soon distanced me, until at last all I could see of my companion was a pillar of smoke, rising apparently from the heather, which showed me that he was resting and waiting for me to come up to him.

Judge my surprise and delight when I discovered him seated in a rocky corner, in the side of just such a little ravine as Nelly had described to me.

'How long have you been there, Rawdon?'

'Just as long as the difference between your time for ascending the hill and mine—I haven't got a watch, and I haven't a pedometer, so I can't tell you either how many steps or how many minutes I took to reach this. But I can tell you something, I am dreadfully peckish. Have you brought anything to eat with you?'

'Nothing—not even a sandwich. That basket of yours might have held all that we want, but you would insist on filling it with tobacco.'

Hereupon he quoted the old doggerel verse in praise of tobacco—

'Much victuals serve for gluttony, to
fatten men like swine,
But he's a frugal man indeed who on
a leaf can dine;
He needs no napkin for his hands, his
finger-ends to wipe,
Who keeps his kitchen in a box, his
roast meat in a pipe.'

Adding as a comment, in the plainest English prose, that he thought the sooner we made for the top of the hill the better, as he supposed there would be no chance of getting anything until we had done so and come to the bottom again; so we began to trudge on again, he taking the top of the

bank, I walking along the bed of the little mountain streamlet, now innocent of water, and looking right and left for the *Osmunda Regalis*.

I was rather puzzled at first, there seemed to be so many big ferns; but remembering that the particular fern I was in search of, sometimes grew to the height of nine feet, I soon determined to take no notice of any which did not at least outtop my shoulders. At last I thought that I had found my prize. Rawdon, far away on the rocks above me, looked like a goat. I called to him to come down.

'What is it?' he inquired, when he had got half-way.

'Do you know anything about ferns?'

'Not much. There's the maiden's hair, and——'

'Never mind the "and." Do you know the Royal Osmund when you see it?'

'Never heard of it before, but perhaps I might know it by instinct—as I should recognize any palatable dish that might be set before me at this moment.'

'Come down and look at this fern.'

In a few minutes he was with me, and his arguments, added to my own prejudiced opinion, convinced me that I had got hold of a fine specimen of the veritable and much coveted fern that Nelly wanted. I believe he knew all the time what a goose I was making of myself, but I forgave him, along with all other small offenders, when I took my degree.

And here I found there *was* some use in the fishing-rod. Joining two pieces together he bound the stem of my fern to the piece, thus considerably lessening my trouble in carrying my prize, and the chances of breaking it. We now made for the summit in good earnest.

The top of Moel Famman is conspicuous in the landscape, not only because it is the highest of the range of hills to which it belongs, but because it is crowned by a square stone tower of considerable size, called the Jubilee Tower, one of the many relics that remain of the mis-directed enthusiasm of some of those who took part in the rejoicings over the fiftieth anniversary of the accession of good King George the Third. We were disappointed on reaching it to find the masonry in very bad repair, and that it was impossible to enter the building, in consequence of the number of stones in front of the doorway, which quite choked it up. An inscription runs round the upper part of the tower, setting forth the date and purpose of its erection; but a great part of it had fallen to the ground, and I did not consider it worth while to copy what remained, although I always carry a pencil and a note-book to dot down anything curious that comes in my way.

The view from the top was magnificent. We could see the line of sea coast as far as the mouth of the Mersey, the estuary of the Dee, and scores of towns and villages lay spread out like a map; while on the other side the fruitful vale of Clwyd, rightly termed the Eden of Wales, reposed beneath us. We came down another side of the mountain, and Rawdon was not long disappointed in his desire to refresh the inner man, for before we reached the bottom we lighted on a small homestead, where a sort of homely merrymaking was being held. Here we were hospitably invited to sit down to a table laden with good cheer, and both of us did ample justice to it. In fact, so well pleased were we with our entertainment, and so glad of the opportunity of resting ourselves,

that it was nine o'clock before we said farewell, and a pitch dark night.

'I say,' whispered Rawdon, as we were preparing to leave, 'I think we ought to make these people a present of some sort. Suppose you give them four shillings for me, and what you like for yourself. I will settle with you afterwards.'

While I was paying this little tribute to my hostess, I made some inquiries as to our whereabouts, and learnt to my dismay that we were four miles from Rheul, and could not possibly reach in time for a homeward train that evening. The present, which they evidently did not expect, appeared to be a most pleasant surprise to the good people, and we left the house amid a perfect volley of blessings, in Welsh, from the assembled company—at least I hope they were blessings—but my knowledge of the Welsh language at that time was so limited, that they might have been anathemas of the loudest description.

We could get no conveyance at Rheul, and had to trudge back to Denbigh through the dark, getting there some time after midnight. I said good-bye to Rawdon at old Price's door—his last words were a promise to meet me at the station at six o'clock, and settle accounts. Then an old Welsh-woman, who had been sitting up for me, brought me my candle, and in a very few minutes I was in my own room, having first carefully deposited my treasure in a jar in the drawing-room, where I thought Nelly would be certain to find it, for I did not expect to see her in the morning.

Once in my own apartments, I sat down to my table to put into a permanent form some thoughts that had been running through my head during the day. How

long I remained awake I don't know, but at four o'clock I woke up to find to my surprise that I had gone to sleep in my chair, and thanked my stars that it was no later. I hastily put together the few little things which had not been packed for me in my absence, dressed for my journey, and descended to the breakfast-room, where I found not only my breakfast awaiting me, but to my surprise Nelly waiting to take her place at the head of the table.

'You dear, good-natured, good-for-nothing, stupid man,' was her greeting, as I entered the room; 'do you know what you have done?'

My conscience did not accuse me of having done anything wrong, so I refused to cry peccavi until she gave me a little more light. Nelly did not keep me long in suspense.

'Do you know what you did yesterday?'

'I went up Moel Famman, and

—, and brought back—'

'And brought back the largest fern I could find.'

'Which was—'

'The *Osmunda Regalis*,' I faltered.

'A piece of bracken!'

'At any rate this is not a piece of bracken,' I exclaimed in desperation, producing from my pocket my last night's lucubration, 'Will you take this in remembrance of the day I tried to find the Royal Osmund for you?'

It was a sonnet, entitled

MOEL FAMMAU.

I found the mother of the hills: she lay
Beneath a slumbrous canopy of blue,
Which kissed her dewy eyelids as she
drew

In her sweet slumber the sweet airs of
May,

Which fluttered round her, wreathing
in their play

Her mural crown, with locks of
fleecy hue,

And on her rounded breast two
blossoms grew;

And one I plucked, and kissed, and bore
away,

And here it is; and with it—what are
these?

A maiden's curl, a letter, a small
glove.

Hill-mother, when her breast, not thine
did please,

In far less healthy fields my soul did
rove;

For thou art steadfast—she the summer
breeze,

That wantons round thee. But of
such is love.

'I burnt curl, letter, and glove
last night, Nelly. Shall I tell you
why?'

There is no need to tell you what
took place during the few minutes
I still had left. Suffice it to say
that I left Denbigh that morning
under a promise to return, not to
go away again alone.

Heigho! How our dreams
vanish. The next winter, at a
ball, some consummate ninny-
hammer contrived through his
clumsiness to cripple her for life,
and all these years she has lain on
a sofa, and therefore—

No, sir, you are quite wrong—
I have been married some years.
But she—she writes me affection-
ate notes at Christmas time, and
on the anniversary of the day when
I climbed Moel Famman. My wife
bids me burn these notes, but I
do not think that I am commit-
ting any sin in keeping them, for
old acquaintance' sake.

* * * *

I looked out for Rawdon at the
railway station that morning, but
he was nowhere in sight, nor have
I seen or heard of him since.

A RAVEN'S FEATHER.

MAY WE DRINK COLD WATER? AND, IF SO, WHEN?

By MRS. J. H. RIDDELL.

IF any one of the medical men who last winter did such gallant battle in favour of alcohol, were to inform the British public that a tumbler or two of cold water is not absolutely injurious to the human constitution, he would be conferring a greater boon on several of his fellow-creatures than can well be estimated.

It would not be of the slightest use for a teetotalor, hydropathist, or any other fanatic who believes solely and wholly in cold water, to give such an assurance.

The testimony of people who drink when they are not thirsty—who, on principle, swallow pints of cold water the moment they get out of bed in the morning, and who repeat the dose at stated intervals during the course of the day, when no ordinary man or woman would think of taking it, cannot be regarded as either satisfactory or trustworthy.

They are blinded by prejudice—they are following an ideal which is neither romantic nor pleasant; they hold a creed as little elastic in its articles as a rule-of-three sum.

They drink water, and nothing else; they drink it at certain times, and accompanied by magical rites and numbers. To be sure, it is something to know that in our land there is a race of professing water-drinkers, some of whom reach a good old age; but whenever a question of diet becomes one of line and plummet, too, it becomes at the same time hopeless as regards general applicability.

What the world really wants is a man, having authority, who shall

write to the 'Times,' and say—'There is nothing in the nature of cold water—providing always it be not foul with sewage, or sparkling from contiguity to a churchyard—which can be considered deleterious to health.'

'A man ordinarily strong may as safely drink a glass of water when he is thirsty, as he may eat a steak when he is hungry.'

Of course the letter would be very differently worded. The writer would cite, in support of his statement, various chemical authorities—he would adduce recondite medical testimony—he might even introduce a case of recovery from dangerous illness, attributable, when all other remedies had failed, to a draught of pure cold water. He would clothe his meaning in professional language, but still it might be hoped his language would be sufficiently explicit to make the general public understand that water and poison are not synonymous terms—that the former is indeed by many degrees the less dangerous of the two; nay, that there may be certain conditions under which it is possible for water to prove as beneficial to the body as it is acceptable to the palate.

'But,' remarks the attentive reader of this paper, 'you are setting up ninepins in order to knock them over. Who ever said, or thought, that cold water was unwholesome?'

To which I reply, 'Many people; not theoretically, perhaps, but practically, certainly.'

If a person does not want to drink water, the question naturally

slumbers; but if he does, the conversation which ensues is this:

'You should not drink so much cold water.'

'Why not?'

'Because it is not good for you.'

'Why is it not good for me?'

'Because it is not.'

An eminently satisfactory answer!

What the experience of others may be I cannot tell; mine own has invariably been that if a man, woman, or child be thirsty, he, she, or it, is told not to drink water.

As no human being, not a fanatic, ever wishes to drink water excepting when he is thirsty, the inference is self-evident.

Supposing the weather to be warm, as it is occasionally in England, and that a man being so likewise wishes for a glass of water, some friend is certain to exclaim—

'You should not drink water.'

'Why not?'

'Because you are so warm.'

Or, if the day be frosty, the remonstrance runs thus:

'You should not drink water.'

'Why not?'

'Because it is so cold.'

And this unacknowledged but inveterate prejudice against water is so deeply rooted in all classes of the community; it is so little used internally; it is decried so continually, that the mystery to me is, why Drs. Frankland and Letheby should be perpetually troubling themselves about the quality of London water.

What can it possibly matter whether water be pure or impure, when no one drinks it? No one—unless it may be a stray imp coming from school, who climbs up to one of the drinking-fountains, and fills and empties the chain-secured shell, with a vague idea that he is doing something wrong, and a very certain impression that he glories in doing it.

To revert, however, to the original argument, 'May we drink cold water; and, if so, when?' Virtually, we are told we may when not thirsty—which means, in practice, never.

Now out of this reply there arises three fresh questions:

1. Whence comes this prejudice against water?

2. Why should it be considered an improper agent to use in the quenching of thirst?

3. Can any person say, of his own knowledge, that illness has resulted from persons drinking water when they felt disposed to take it, and from no other cause?

To the first question, it may be sufficient to suggest, that men, as a rule, dislike and distrust water, because they have a liking for, and a profound faith in, beer or its equivalents.

A man cannot serve two masters. If he be serving beer or its equivalents, as a matter of course he feels it a reflection on his master to see any one relishing a glass of water. If it be his creed that malt or the juice of the grape should, in some shape or other, enter into the composition of every fluid that passes the lips, there can be nothing wonderful in the fact of the holder of a more liberal creed seeming obnoxious to him. Observing, in a word, that some persons, under some circumstances, actually relish cold water, and swallow it with absolute enjoyment, he has set up a giant of prejudice beside each running stream, and babbling brook, and sparkling fountain, to prevent passers-by tasting, touching, handling.

Those who are fond of tracing back incomprehensible ideas to their first sources, may perhaps suggest that the dislike to water, which seems so very human, origi-

nated in the superabundance of that fluid which covered the earth at the time of the Deluge.

The first mention of wine is after that date; and up to the present time, from the time of Noah, all men—with the exception of the Rechabites and modern teetotallers—seem to have been shunning more and more the delights of that cup which, as has been so aptly remarked,

‘Neither cheers nor inebriates.’

However this may be, no rational person can doubt that the general dislike to see water taken internally, is as absurd as the dislike all those who have arrived at middle age can recollect as once existing against its use externally.

Forty years ago, or even less, what was thought of the person who ‘tubbed,’ summer and winter—who ‘ruined his constitution’ by sponging himself all over from head to foot in cold water? Nay, so recently as the period when the ‘Saturday Review’ was launched, the use of water externally was confined to so small a class, that the early writers in its columns—superior as they seemed in all other respects to human weaknesses—could not avoid telling their readers, by implication, that they bathed themselves.

Some of the very wittiest remarks that were ever made on the subject of tubbing, may be found by referring to the youthful columns of our now old acquaintance.

Thorough ablutions were even then so new as to seem strange. Now every man washes, or is supposed to wash himself, whether the morning chance to be cold or warm. It was not so everywhere once; it may not be so everywhere even yet.

For instance, in Ireland, where, amongst the lower orders, dirt was considered equivalent to a top-

coat, and where an old woman of eighty, driven by the famine to the poor-house, being washed for the only time in eighty years, died of the shock.

Or even in England, where, it strikes me, there might still be found men and women as innocent of a thorough scrub as that poor victim—where there certainly are street arabs who might have stood for the originals of this story:

‘My lad, I will give you half-a-crown if you tell me how you get into your clothes.’

‘Please your honour, I never get out of ‘em.’

Nevertheless water is now used, and largely, externally. Perhaps, in the good time coming, it may be found to supply a want in our internal economy.

Which remark leads naturally to the second question previously enumerated—

‘Why should water be considered an improper agent to use in the quenching of thirst?’

Speaking with due respect for medical authority, and obscurity, and correction of this statement, if any be made, it may be observed that nine hundred and ninety-nine people out of a thousand have the vaguest possible idea as to the real cause of thirst. The artificial and luxurious state of general society rendering positive hunger an impossibility to that class of the community who are in the habit of considering cause and effect, the persons composing that class have come to the conclusion that thirst must be as impossible a thing to occur naturally in the routine of civilization as hunger. Which would be all very well were the blood as manageable as the stomach—as docile a steed as the latter over-worked horse.

If people eat too much, they are not hungry; but if they eat and drink too much they are thirsty:

hence arises the idea that thirst is abnormal, instead of natural.

'Of course, if you are thirsty, you must be ill,' wise folks declare.

My good friends, are you not slightly illogical? In the same breath you would not hesitate to declare—'If you are hungry, you must be well.'

Before proceeding further may we remark, without the risk of being called superficial, not to say ignorant, that doctors occasionally misapprehend this question as well as the unlearned. Many cases in point occur to me, but I will only cite three.

A man came to a great physician to be cured. He (the physician) has passed to his rest, and left a sufficient fortune behind him for the enjoyment of those whom it might concern; so it cannot hurt anybody to state that, in the opinion of the writer, he was, despite his standing, a remarkably clever quack. Not of the disreputable sort; on the contrary, he has been known to refuse fees. To many a guinea he turned an unintelligent face in the case to which I refer.

The man came. He had drank water largely, and a good many other things as well—so the physician facetiously suggested; and the soft impeachment was owned.

The physician put him on diet. He observed that diet. The weather was frightfully hot. Had he only been permitted water in quantity, the patient would have rested content; but water was forbidden. He was allowed to rinse out his mouth, and he did so, swallowing, it may be, some drops surreptitiously. For five weeks he endured the martyrdom; then he returned home a shadow of his former self.

Cured, shall we say? Well, the one competent authority pronounced he was—only, unhappily for the authority, he died. Other causes may have supervened—pos-

sibly they did; but the fact remains that during the whole term of his probation his sole cry was for water, and that was prohibited; and when he recrossed his own threshold, the very dogs scarcely recognised their master.

The scene shifts. A woman nursing a patient in the hot summer weather. To eat is impossible—to drink is a necessity.

'What is that you are taking?' the medical attendant inquires.

'Water.'

'The worst thing imaginable to quench thirst. You should take tea—it quenches thirst, and makes you cool afterwards.'

To believe which, with the thermometer at 90° in the shade, was a trial of faith.

Shortly after she meets with another authority who instructs her as follows:

'Thirst is always the result of weakness. A stimulant is the best remedy for thirst. I have invariably found it so in my practice.'

'But she does not find it so' in her own experience; and on leaving the medical professor, she inquires of a chemist (I do not mean a chemist and druggist)—

'Will you tell me—that is, if you know—what is the cause of thirst?'

'The blood wants more liquid,' he immediately answered. 'The blood is asking for water.'

Voilà! he might be right or he might be wrong; but supposing one asked the cause of hunger, and a person answered—'The stomach wants to be filled,' we should say, 'This man speaks to the point—his theory is at all events intelligible.'

Why, therefore, should we consider thirst a sign of disease? Many people think it lies in their mouths and throats, and that if a few mouthfuls of liquid will not

allay the irritation, it is time a doctor was sent for.

My friends, your dry tongues and parched throats are only signs and symptoms. When you are thirsty, millions of trumpet-mouthed vessels are waiting eagerly expectant to suck up the moisture they hope you will be wise enough to swallow for your benefit. Your blood is asking them to furnish it with fresh reinforcements; already is the glass at your lips, when the familiar, 'You should not drink that!' meets your ears.

If you are wise, you will at that juncture drink water and nothing else.

When Nature is not screaming her wants out to you, do as you please; quaff Bass, Moët, Sillery, Larose, Burgundy, even sherry, and leave her to set right what you have been doing your best to put wrong; but when she appeals to you do not neglect her cry. She has carried you over many a terrible crisis—listen to her voice when, plainly as her language will allow, she asks you for the only beverage that can benefit her.

She knows what she wants, and not the greatest physician who ever lived is so skilled a chemist as the great Mother, whose entreaties and instructions men systematically ignore.

As regards the third point, perhaps it will be sufficient to leave the answer to individual experience.

Did you, sir, or did you, madam, ever see a case of serious illness caused by a draught of pure cold—not iced—water, and for the origin of which some other very probable theory might not be propounded? Plenty of stories to that effect are travelling about the world, but if their origin were traced, it would usually be

found in the fact of a man or a woman having an ugly eruption on the face, which he or she is anxious to imply does not arise from constitutional or spirituous causes.

'It all came from taking a tumbler of cold water when warm,' or 'bathing my face in cold water when heated with walking.' Obvious moral implied—'Avoid cold water!'

Only the other evening, speaking on this subject, a friend remarked:

'You remember Jones, son-in-law to Robinson,—how dreadfully his face was disfigured! That, he told me, was entirely owing to one glass of water.'

'Did he never drink anything else?' asked a gentleman present, who had some knowledge of the habits of the said Jones, son-in-law to Robinson.

'Besides,' observed the present writer, 'even supposing Mr. Jones' remarkable statement to be strictly true, one swallow does not make a summer; and it does not follow because so singular a phenomena occurred in a single instance, that people are never again for ever to drink water when they wish to do so.'

Whilst this paper was in progress, I received a letter from a friend in which the following passage occurred:

'I am perfectly well so long as I touch neither wine nor spirits.'

In my reply, I mentioned the subject of this article, imagining naturally that if a man had abandoned beer, wine, and brandy, he must have betaken himself to water. By return of post came this answer:

'I hate water!—I drink cyder.'

Would any one be 'surprised to hear' the author of that sentence remark—'You should not drink cold water?' I think not.

PAULINE LUCCA;

OR, THE WARLIKE ADVENTURES OF A PEACEABLE PRIMA DONNA.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF HOFF.

IT was the 18th of August, 1870, and the citizens of Berlin were hurrying at a rapid pace once again to the Litsass columns, to get a sight of a war despatch which had just been posted up.

There may have been fifty persons of both sexes, young and old, and of all ranks, crowding round a column near Victoria Street; naturally, those who stood at some distance could learn nothing of the despatch, which was printed upon orange-coloured paper.

'Read it out loud!' cried a voice from the background. 'Yes, yes, read it out!' resounded in a confused chorus.

'Don't push so, good woman! How can it interest you?' exclaimed a broad-made, district inspector, as a young woman with a child in her arms tried to work her way through with the assistance of her elbows.

'How can it interest me?' she returned, surveying the questioner with a defiant glance, 'My husband is with the Landwehr before Metz, so I think indeed—'

'Make room for the Landwehr's wife!' sounded from all sides, and a lane was instantly formed, so that the woman and her child could comfortably reach the despatch.

A well-dressed gentleman, somewhat bald, with a pair of gold spectacles on his broad nose, now begged for silence, and when he had obtained it, read out the despatch in a loud, full-toned voice. It was dated from Pont-à-Mousson on the 17th of August, and brought the news that the enemy had made a sortie from Metz on

the 16th, but had been thrown back upon the fortress in spite of considerable superiority in numbers, after a vehement contest, twelve hours long. 'The losses in all arms, on both sides, are very considerable,' came as a damper to this joyful news of victory.

'Long live the army! Hurrah for Prince Frederick Charles!' shouted the crowd, waving their hats for joy.

The group had just begun to disperse when an open carriage drove up. The beautifully dressed lady who was sitting in it ordered her coachman to stop close to the column, and commissioned the servant, who sprang quickly from the box, to find out for her the contents of the latest despatch.

'Your servant can spare himself the trouble, madame,' said the former reader, as he approached the carriage door, and saluted the lady, taking off his hat.

'Ah, how do you do, good Doctor!' exclaimed the lady, visibly pleased; 'it is so long since I have seen you. Please tell me quickly where we have again been victorious?'

The gentleman addressed replied with a smile, 'You seem convinced beforehand that we have been victorious; and you are only concerned to know *where*? Well, then, a sanguinary battle has been fought near Metz, and the French have been thrown back upon the fortress; but there have been great losses on both sides.'

'Maria and Joseph!' exclaimed the lady, with a slight Austrian accent, 'it is His Royal Highness

Prince Frederick Charles's army which is there, and my husband is with it. Oh! I hope nothing has happened to my Adolphe! I have had no news of him. Are there any special names of the killed and wounded in the despatch?"

'Generals von Düring and von Wedell have fallen, and von Rauch and von Grüter are wounded,' announced the doctor.

'Is there nothing about Lieutenant von Rhaden in it?' the lady asked further, in an anxious voice.

'Your husband is not mentioned in the despatch,' answered the Doctor, smiling at her naïve question.

'Then I must immediately inquire by telegraph. Will you see to the telegram for me, Doctor? I can have no peace until I have learnt that my husband is safe. We are close to the house, you know. Please stand by me in my loneliness.'

Thus petitioned, the Doctor acceded willingly, and followed the carriage, which stopped before a house in Victoria Street.

'Who was that interesting lady?' inquired a gentleman, habited as a traveller, of the district inspector.

'You don't belong to this place?' asked the city official in his turn.

'No. I come from Dantzic.'

'And so a stranger? I thought so, or you would have known "our Pauline."' Thus speaking, he turned hastily away, without condescending to take any further notice of his questioner.

This last looked after him in perplexity, and then was about to depart, when a well-dressed gentleman, who had heard his question, came up to him, saying, 'The little lady with the *spirituelle* face and bright eyes, is Madame Pauline Lucca, the court singer and prima donna of the Opera, and the wife

of Baron von Rhaden, who is now at the war. She is immensely popular in Berlin, and is usually called by high and low "our Pauline."

The stranger courteously returned his thanks for this explanation, and went on his way.

Madame Lucca had hardly entered her house when the porter announced:

'Madame, this despatch has just arrived for you.'

She tore the cover in haste, and read, 'Lieutenant von Rhaden wounded, but not dangerously.'

'I had a presentiment of it!' she exclaimed, with a sorrowful countenance. 'I dreamt three nights running of serpents. He is wounded; and though the despatch says, "not dangerously," still he wants nursing, and I am a hundred miles away from him.' In great agitation she continued, as if speaking to herself, 'I can see him lying with a pale face and parched lips, looking round in vain for a cooling drink. No, no! I know my duty, and I shall do it. John must not take the horses out, I shall go out again directly. Where is my maid? Come here, Edith. You must prepare everything quickly—we have a journey to go. Take the small box, and only the linen that is necessary; a change of dress will not be wanted for we shan't be invited to court where we are going. And here is money, buy everything that my husband will need to strengthen him—pigeons, chickens in tin cases, extract of meat, preserves, and we must have caviare; bring a little barrel from the Russian's in Charlotte Street; don't forget, too, the finest cigars, and fetch a dozen bottles of the best wine from the cellar. I must also have a pass, so I must go first to Count Eulenberg, the Minister of the Interior. Only be quick,

Edith, pack everything in a case, and send it to the Anhalt railway station. When you have finished we shall set off!

The Doctor had not tried to check this stream of words; he knew from experience that he might just as well have attempted to stop a steam-engine in its course. Now he rose from his chair, and asked calmly,

'And where, if I may venture to ask the question, is madame going to travel?'

'Where? Into the enemy's country. I am going to fetch my husband, to nurse him well here at home.'

'But in the despatch nothing is said about the place where your husband is.'

'I shall search through the whole of Alsace and Lorraine until I find him.'

'But, madame, the passenger traffic upon the Anhalt and Potsdam railroads is as good as stopped, and they only take the military and war material.'

'I am the wife of Lieutenant von Rhaden, and therefore a soldier's wife,' she answered, drawing up her small figure, 'and if I do not suit them as a prima donna, then they can forward me as war material. Why are you still waiting, Edith? *Allons!*'

The maid was about to go when the doctor stopped her.

'Your maid can buy fowls, but the invalid will not be able to eat meat at first.'

'But he must eat?'

'Certainly, but only the hospital diet which is prescribed for him.'

'And what may that be? Hospital soup? Broth of the trenches? My Adolphe isn't accustomed to such things; he must have something strengthening.'

'You are going to useless trouble and expense,' said the Doctor. 'If you wish to take something with

you let it be preserved vegetables, condensed milk, Hoff's extract of malt, coffee, tea, and sugar; for the invalid may have such things as these. If you think well I will make the necessary purchases myself.'

'Most excellent Doctor, I could embrace you!'

'And I should not be so ungallant as to make any objections.'

After the 'aid for the sick and wounded' had been settled, Madame Lucca again entered her carriage and drove to Count Eulenberg's, and entreated him most urgently for a pass to the seat of war for herself and her maid.

The Minister was not a little astonished at this request, and tried to dissuade the singer from making the journey on most urgent grounds. He mentioned especially that the railroads were almost entirely taken up for the military trains, and that even private posting could hardly take place.

'Just think of all the difficulties, madame; a journey beyond the Rhine at this present time is a risk for ladies, so that I cannot recommend you to undertake it.'

'Excellency,' replied the suppliant, 'no risk will keep me back, and I know how to overcome difficulties. If I can get no railroads, carriages, or horses, for my journey, then I shall find some other means of travelling;—go I must,* and I shall have a cow saddled!'

'If you insist upon your project with such energy,' said the Minister, smiling, 'I must do your will. I will have your pass made out in German and French, and in it request all the authorities to execute your wishes everywhere, as far as possible.'

'Excellency, I thank you in my name and my husband's. I will

* Her own words.

certainly make the best use of the pass. But I beg you to be so good as to make it a little urgent on the authorities to give me help when I require it; it will be of the greatest necessity, especially in the enemy's country.'

On the 21st of August we find Madame Lucca, with her maid, at the Anhalt railway station. The doctor has taken charge of the box of clothes and a not-very-small packing-case, full of preserved vegetables, &c., and having consigned them to the baggage department, has taken two first-class tickets for the ladies to Frankfort. The ticket-giver, however, has told him that the trains are subject to many stoppages, and that an unbroken journey must not be expected.

'When under way one must go on!' said Madame Lucca on hearing this remark, with a slight shrug; and thanking the doctor for all his trouble, she and her companion got into the compartment assigned to them, and away puffed the train with the courageous songstress, her anxious maid, and the preserved vegetables.

The train went on without interruption for about three hours, and Madame Lucca openly expressed her satisfaction to her maid:

'Do you see, Edith, how quick we are going? The Doctor and even the Minister wanted to dissuade me from my journey by all the fears they expressed. Ah, Edith! how glad my poor, wounded husband will be when I suddenly appear before him, and cry, "Adolphe, here I am—your Pauline!"'

'We have not yet got to the end, madame,' croaked the modern Cassandra.

A long-drawn shrill whistle now sounded from the engine; the train moved slower, and finally stopped

at a small side station. The doors of the carriages were opened noisily, and the porters were heard crying, 'Passengers will please to get out! Claim your luggage!'

The door of Madame Lucca's compartment was opened by the guard himself, saying,

'Madame, will you have the goodness to get out?'

'But why must I get out? I have made myself so comfortable here.'

'I am all the more sorry to be obliged to disarrange you. A despatch just received from Saarbrücken orders us to stop here, and wait for the Frankfort train; we are to receive some prisoners from it, and return with them to Berlin.'

'And when will the train come, that is to take us on farther?'

The guard shrugged his shoulders to his ears.

'That can't be told with any certainty.'

'All get out! All get out!' was heard from the railroad official, still more urgently.

The guard helped the lady out, with the courtesy of a man of the world.

'Has madame much luggage with her?'

'Yes,' answered the prima donna quite put out; 'a small box and a packing-case with preserved vegetables.'

'May I ask for the luggage-ticket? I will send you your box and case directly.'

'But what must I do with them?'

'You must be so good as to look after them, until a passenger train comes from Berlin, and then give up your luggage again.' And so saying the guard respectfully withdrew.

How cast-down she now stood—so bitterly deceived in her hopes of a quick journey—and looked with sad eyes at the little station-house,



UNIV.
OF
MICH.
Drawn by R. Newcombe.]

"PAULINE LUCCA."

which was quite full of soldiers, cantiniers, telegraph officials, and all sorts of people connected with the war.

'What are we to do now, Edith?'

'We must patiently conform to circumstances,' was the reply, with the resignation of a philosopher.

'Where am I to put the box and case, madame?' inquired a porter, as he brought the two articles of luggage on a truck.

'In the house,' ordered Edith.

'That can't be done,' returned the porter, smiling. 'The inside of the house is more than full, and there is a steam like a burning turf-heap. If you think well, I will put both the boxes upon the little hillock close to the house, and you can sit there, and look about a little at the country. The view from there is very romantic.'

'Very romantic!' repeated Madame Lucca, and it sounded like a prolonged melancholy echo.

'Well,' urged the porter, 'where am I to put the luggage? I have no time to lose.'

'Let us encamp, then, upon the romantic hillock,' said Edith, good-humouredly.

'Many a one would have rested gladly upon the hillock, who now sleeps under one,' remarked the porter, half-reproachfully, as he led the way to the eminence.

'Edith, give the man a thaler for his *jeu de mots*.'

'Madame, he will be satisfied with a fee of ten silver groschen. We should certainly be oftener in a state for wit (which is, besides, frequently at our expense), if something extra had to be paid for it.'

Two minutes later, the court singer, Baroness von Rhaden, was seated upon the case of preserved vegetables, and her companion in misfortune upon the box.

After a short survey of the 'romantic neighbourhood,' Madame Lucca took up an opera-glass and

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looked towards the north, from which direction the next train would come—and certainly the sailor at the mast-head of Columbus's ship, could not have looked out more longingly for 'land,' than did the singer upon the romantic hillock, for the steam of an engine.

'Do you see nothing, madame?'

'Nothing. You take the glass—perhaps you have better eyes than I. What do you see?'

'Everything else, but no rescuing boat, with its helm turned this way to deliver us from this inhospitable shore.'

'This execrable war!' exclaimed the singer angrily. 'Why do people kill each other? There is no sense in it!'

Then a deep sigh stole forth, ending in a prolonged

'Ah! if only Herr von Hülsen knew what is happening to me!'

At the close of this interjection, however, a slight smile played round her small, charmingly formed mouth; she was thinking of Herr von Hülsen as a concealed spectator.

'Yes, indeed, the Intendant-General,' added Edith, with an important nod of the head, 'if he had a suspicion of this romantic situation, he would not be able to sleep all night.'

'You think so?' said the singer, with a roguish wink. 'I know him better than that. If Herr von Hülsen knew how I am situated at this moment, he would rub his hands with glee, laugh maliciously, and *think* even if he did not say it out loud, "It serves her quite right! She always will have her own way;—she only attends to me from necessity. Her being left in the lurch may, perhaps, make her a little more discreet!" That is what he would think. But he sha'n't know anything of my war adventures: no one can find out about them—if only some news-

paper correspondent does not betray me. Yes, yes, gentlemen of the press, you are as gossiping as old women. I can tell you nothing, without its being immediately hung on the church clock, with romantic embellishments.'

After another keen glance around, she spoke again:

'Do you know, Edith——?'

'Madame?'

'I am hungry.'

'So am I. Let us eat some biscuits, and think it is a supper at Carl Hiller's, such as those at a friedrich d'or, which you, madame, and the Baron used to be so enthusiastic about.'

'I never feel happier,' declared the prima donna, 'than when I am at Hiller's with my husband, in the evening, after having sung my part at the Opera.'

Edith opened the travelling-bag, and both set to work valiantly.

'Here comes the Berlin train!' suddenly shouted a porter. The bell rang, there was a shrill whistle from the engine, and an endless train of carriages rolled slowly into the station and stopped.

To spring up, and fly to the train, was the work of a moment for Madame Lucca, whilst Edith remained behind to guard the luggage.

'Where is the guard? I must speak to him!' exclaimed the singer, hastily.

'I am the guard. How can I serve you, madame?'

'I have two first-class tickets for myself and my maid; we have been set down here, and told to wait for the next train that should arrive. Will you, please, give us places?'

'Honoured lady,' replied the guard, with a shrug, 'I regret that I am not able to serve you. The whole train is stuffed full of soldiers, horses, guns, provisions, and forage; and, as you may see, all who were in the station-house have

been pushed in as well, so that not even a place for a mouse could be found.'

'But indeed, sir, I must go on!' urged Madame Lucca, almost crying.

'We cannot take a civilian in this train,' said the guard, very courteously but decidedly, and was about to leave her.

'Stop! stop—one minute!'

'I have not a second to spare. The train is going on immediately.'

He gave the signal, and the conductor blew a shrill whistle. In this extremity Madame Lucca placed herself before the guard, and cried—

'Won't you even respect this pass?'

The official glanced hastily at the document held out to him, then read it more attentively, and finally said—

'Ah! the wife of Lieutenant von Rhaden! You wish to go to your wounded husband? That is another thing—it must be done. But how and where I am to find places for two ladies, the gods alone can know!'

'Who are in that carriage?' she asked, pointing to a first-class compartment.

'That is the officers' carriage.'

'War-comrades of my husband's? They will surely move together a little bit if I ask them!' So saying she stepped up quickly to the carriage, and asked at the open window—

'Gentlemen, hav'n't you room enough for two enchanted princesses? We will make ourselves very small.'

'Surely that is our Lucca!' said a voice.

'Yes, I am that unfortunate one,' she declaimed with comic pathos; 'and they want to leave her behind once more.'

'There are ten of us in this

compartment,' said a young lieutenant; 'but to make a place for you, the faithful wife, I will sit upon comrade von S——'s knees.'

'And I,' quickly added a second, 'will take comrade von L—— on my knees as my adopted child, so that your maid may find room.'

The words were quickly followed by deeds, and two places became vacant. The guard begged for haste, and Madame Lucca got in quickly, beckoning hastily to her maid, who pointed in perplexity to the box and case.

'Ah, good heavens!' exclaimed the distressed singer, 'I did not remember the vegetables!'

'The vegetables?' resounded from the lips of the astonished officers.

'Yes, gentlemen, just something to strengthen my sick husband. Perhaps you can take it in here as well?'

The same porter as before had quickly understood the state of affairs; he brought the box and case, and pushed them both into the carriage, so that the legs of the officers found themselves somewhat confined in space.

Last of all Edith got in. 'Ready!' shouted the conductor, and his whistle sounded. 'Forwards!' cried the guard, and away the iron fury hissed and snorted, on the wings of fiery steam to the scene of war.

The conversation in the carriage was quite unconstrained. The officers were full of confidence in victory, and panted for combat and renown. Madame Lucca was rejoicing at the prospect of meeting her husband; and her maid carried on the consumption of biscuit, begun upon the romantic hillock, with undiminished ardour.

'Quickly as the engine steams along, it isn't quick enough for me,' said Ensign von P——. 'I can hardly wait for the time, when I shall have the good luck to try

my strength with these puffed-up Frenchmen.'

'Comrade von L——, you are rather restless as my adopted child upon my knees,' said von S——, laughing.

'I am afraid,' said Madame Lucca, 'that the case incommodes you, Lieutenant?'

'Not in the least, madame. I only do not know where to put my legs.'

The train went slower.

'Are we already arriving at Frankfurt?' asked Pauline, full of expectation.

'No, madame, we are still many miles away from the *ci-devant* free city,' replied von L——.

'Here we stop only five minutes, and then go on again.'

Thus conjectured von P——; but it turned out otherwise. The train had not stopped at a station, but in the open country, and there was only a signal-house near at hand.

The Captain leant out of the window, and asked the inspector, who was passing in haste—

'Is there something wrong with the train?'

'No,' was the reply. 'The signalman has given the sign to stop, and the Colonel found orders to wait here, until the invalid train from Saarbrücken arrives, by which he will receive new orders to go on with.'

'What a charming prospect!' sighed the Ensign, and jumped out of the carriage; his comrades followed him, and then helped the ladies to descend.

'How long will it be before the invalid train arrives?' asked Madame Lucca.

'I can't say,' answered the guard, and struck away into a little wood by the side of the line.

The Ensign exclaimed, 'I have tasted nothing since this morning. Oh! a kingdom for a horse! but it

must be the child of a cow, and roasted.'

Lieutenant von L—— drew his belt tighter round his at-any-time slight waist, and ejaculated—'How cruel and austere are ye,immortals! Did not Hector formerly burn for ye the legs of bulls and choice goats? and now ye deny us languishing ones even a cup of coffee.'

'Gentlemen!' interrupted Pauline, with animation. 'I too, can make an offering for Germany's greatness. You shall have something warming in half an hour!'

'Preserved vegetables?' they all asked at once.

'No, coffee, real Mocha. I have two pounds in my travelling bag. Edith, go quickly to the signalman, borrow from him the largest cooking vessel he has, and fill it with water—there is a well yonder, and bring it to me on that grass plat. But what must we do for firing? The gentlemen must provide the wood.'

'Whole battalion—fetch wood!' ordered the Captain, and in a few minutes, the broken-up legs of an old garden bench lay at the feet of the 'coffee cook for Germany's greatness.'

Edith brought a tripod and brightly polished brass kettle full of water; the Ensign stuck a handful of love-letters under the fragments of the old garden-bench, put a light to them, and immediately the flames played round the kettle, which was anxiously watched by Madame Lucca, her maid, and the officers.'

'It sings!'—'it steams!'—'it simmers!'—'it boils!' 'Hurrah!' exclaimed the officers, one after the other.

As no coffee-strainer was at hand, Madame Lucca shook the contents of her tin box into the boiling water; and soon the air was fragrant with the odour of coffee.

'Now, gentlemen, cups, cups!' exclaimed the good fairy from Mecca.

The signalman had only two cups, which the officers appropriated to the ladies; for the rest, glasses, pots, a drinking horn, leathern mugs, and such like, were brought as suitable vessels to receive the beverage, and Madame Lucca filled them all hospitably by means of a ladle.

The Ensign inhaled the comforting aromatic vapour, and proposed a toast to their hostess.

The drink was still very hot, and its receptacles were placed upon the turf to cool for a short time. Suddenly, like an apparition from the thicket, the invalid train appeared, with a long-drawn screech. A major who accompanied the train, jumped out of his carriage, and, following the scent, approached the '*Café Royal, sans tasses*,' when, turning to the Hebe still ladling out the Mocha stream, he begged for some coffee for the wounded, who had been without any refreshment for eight hours.

'Gentlemen,' said the cook-artiste, turning to the officers, 'I hope you will all willingly give up your coffee, in favour of the sick!'

The next moment the officers were hurrying to the carriages, each with some coffee to revive a wounded man.

'Madame, I thank you in the names of my sick men,' said the Major. 'To your personal care I recommend a sick man in carriage No. 245. He is a one-year volunteer, the only son of rich parents, who hold an influential civil position, and he is betrothed to a young and wealthy bride—he needs nourishment more than any other.'

Madame Lucca hastened to the compartment pointed out to her,

with her cup of coffee; there lay a handsome young man, with a pale countenance, and covered by a blanket to his chin.

'I am bringing you some coffee, sir!' said Pauline, in her clear voice. The sick man looked at her fixedly, without answering or moving.

'May I raise you?' she asked again, and pushed her little hand under his curly head.

'No, no!—my servant!' he exclaimed, turning away uneasily.

'There is no servant here; permit me to wait upon you as a sister of mercy,' pleaded Pauline, in soft tones.

The sick man shook his head decidedly, and looked anxiously round, as if seeking some one.

'The Major tells me, that you are severely wounded, sir; but I hope the time is not far distant when you will be cured, and can embrace your bride elect with loving arms.'

At these words a stream of tears rushed from the sick man's eyes, and he cried out, as if beside himself, '*I have no longer any arms!*'

Madame Lucca was most deeply affected: a flood of tears poured from her eyes as well; still she succeeded in inducing the sick man to allow her to raise his head, and to drink some coffee.

The unfortunate man had had both arms torn away by a shell close to the shoulders.

After the Colonel had received his new orders from the conductor of the invalid train (which orders remain unknown to us), the train, with Pauline and the jovial party of officers, began to move on again.

In the transit from the signal-house to Frankfort, and from there to Saarbrücken, nothing in particular occurred to the prima donna worthy of transmission to posterity. Her account of the youth-

ful hero without arms, whose future had been destroyed by a shell, had evidently a sobering effect upon the party. The officers, who were so full of life and gaiety, were now more inclined to think of their own approaching fates, so that on the further journey, only a few words were interchanged.

On arriving at Saarbrücken it was already late in the evening. Madame Lucca and her maid got out, and the officers courteously bade adieu to their 'lady comrade von Rhaden,' wishing her the good fortune of speedily finding her husband; after which they wearily sought out the quarters assigned to them.

Madame Lucca asked a guard where she could find the best lodgings in Saarbrücken.

'Lodgings!' repeated the guard, looking at his questioner with astonished eyes. 'There is not a lodging to be heard of in Saarbrücken; every place is occupied by soldiers.'

'And I am so tired!' sighed the weary woman. 'Can't you find us a place for the night? I don't care how small it is; I will pay you royally.'

The guard touched his cap, and considered for a few minutes, then he said: 'I have just been at my uncle's in the shepherd's hut.'

'Let us hurry there!' urged Pauline.

'Nay, twelve men and a corporal are lying there, and the church is full of French prisoners. The only place, wonderful to say, which is not yet secured is——' he stopped.

'Well, what place is still to be had?'

'The engine-house; I could prepare a bed for you there of clean straw, or fragrant hay, unless the place should seem too disreputable for you?'

'Why disreputable?'

'Because we lock up rogues there in time of peace.'

'And in time of war prima donnas. How celestial! But upon mere straw, without any covering?'

'Oh no!' said the guard, reassuringly, 'we have plenty of soft woollen blankets, quite new too, and I shall be able to borrow some, when I say they are for ladies.'

'Here is a louis d'or for you, my friend. Make haste, for fear this last asylum for the homeless should be lost through a requisition.'

'Then please follow me!' said the guard, striding on in front, and followed by the two women.

'Heigh! you there! ladies!' shouted a porter; 'here are still a case and box. Do these things belong to you?'

Oh, those unlucky vegetables! exclaimed the singer, almost in despair.

'Carry the luggage into the engine-house!' ordered Edith.

'Into the engine-house!' murmured the porter. The box is light enough, but the case—*peste!* it is heavy!' Thereupon he did as he had been told.

The guard was a man of his word. He quickly spread out a bundle of straw in the small dark place; then he went away, and returned loaded with blankets.

'There, ladies!' said the bed-maker. 'Now I shall also light a lantern for you, which was given me by the Colonel, who ordered me to say how sorry he is that the ladies could not have better quarters, particularly such a celebrated lady as Madame Lucca!'

'Does he know me, then?'

'Yes, when I asked him for blankets for the ladies, a lieutenant came up and mentioned your name, and the colonel called out, 'At any rate I will send a guard

to the engine-house, to see that she is not stolen in the night.'

'What?'

'Nay; to see that nothing is stolen from her in the night. Now good night, madame.'

'Wait one moment, good man. Won't the door lock?'

'Nay; the last rogue tore off the lock, and then ran away with it. Good-night!'

With this he departed, and the two women were alone.

'Edith,' now said her mistress, 'we mustn't both sleep at once.'

'Why, so, madame?'

'The door can't be locked, you know—who can tell? The night is no one's friend.'

'I have discovered a means of defence, Madame la Baronne.'

'Well?'

'I will push the case with the vegetables before the door inside, and put the box upon it. See, it is quickly done.'

'But it is only a weak bulwark!' and the prima donna gave a woe-begone smile; then they both laid down upon their bed of straw, and wrapped themselves in the soft woollen blankets.

Suddenly a knock sounded on the outside of the door.

'Merciful heavens!' cried the maid, and was at the door with one bound.

'Who's there?' she now asked courageously.

'Lieutenant von L——, the travelling companion of the famous case of vegetables.'

'But what do you want here at this time of night?'

'Only to tell the ladies that they can go to sleep without fear, for I have placed a guard upon the engine-house.'

Then he began to sing 'Buona sera,' from the 'Barbiere,' and departed.

Edith and her mistress laughed, and again retired to their couch.

The fatigue of both was so great, that they slept soundly until the morning.

Then a loud drumming and bugling was to be heard outside, words of command resounded, and cannon and heavy carts rattled by—something unusual must be going on.

The barricade was quickly removed from the door, and Madame Lucca stepped out.

Lieutenant von L—— hurried to meet her, and said, hastily—

‘Good morning, madame! They have all gone on already, and I have only remained to make my report to you. You will find your husband in the hospital at Pont-à-Mousson.’

‘How far from here?’

‘About three miles.*

And off he rushed with the speed of a chassépot bullet.

After the departure of the troops, Saarbrücken looked as if swept out. The singer seeing an old man approaching, called to him.

‘Which of our military commanders are here now?’

‘Only the Duke of Oldenburg. Here he comes riding down the street with his staff.

‘Come, Edith, quick! We must show front to the Duke,’ said Madame Lucca, hurriedly, and both placed themselves in the street.

The Duke of Oldenburg approached.

‘Good morning, your Highness!’ said the singer.

The Duke stopped his horse in astonishment, and looking at the speaker, said:

‘Am I mistaken? No, it is indeed the prima donna, Madame Lucca.

‘I am rejoiced that your High-

* About fourteen English miles.

ness does me the favour of remembering my insignificant person. At court I was presented by his Highness the Duke of Mecklenburg; here, in the market-place, I do it myself. May I have the honour—Pauline Lucca.’

‘But what brings you here, in the turmoil of the war?’

‘I want to go and fetch my husband, who is lying wounded at Pont-à-Mousson. I have got as far as this place; but here the history of the world comes to an end.’

‘What do you mean?’ asked the Duke, laughing.

‘I am fixed here, and can’t get a carriage. Therefore I address myself to your Highness, with the humble request that you will help me.’

‘That, madame, is impossible,’ said the Duke, in a tone of regret. ‘I have no vehicle at my disposal, but the covered cart which carries my servants and travelling necessities.’

‘Your Highness’s servants,’ said the singer, quickly, ‘seem to have very sound legs. Could not a couple of them do the journey to Pont-à-Mousson on foot?’

‘But I have no seat to offer you in the cart!’

‘Most serene Duke, have you no other objection?’

‘No, that is all.’

‘Then I beg for three men from the cart to do what I ask, so that I may get up into it.’

The Duke acceded to her request with a smile, and giving her his hand in the most friendly manner, hastily bade her adieu, and trotted off with his staff.

Three of the servants had already got down from the cart, and Madame Lucca and her maid got in, and in the course of a few hours reached Pont-à-Mousson.

(To be continued.)

‘WITH THE BLOOM ON.’

THE sky is flushed with splendour,
 Tinged are the leaves with gold ;
 Grass-sheltered shrubs and flow'rets,
 Exotic charms unfold.
 Floats through the crystal chamber
 Their exquisite perfume,
 Beauty is on each blossom,
 And on the grapes the bloom.

There hang the purple clusters,
 There, where the trellised vine
 Clings to the topmost casement,
 Pomona loved such sign.
 And such did classic poets,
 Emblem most apt assume
 Of Autumn and her bounties—
 Grape clusters rich with bloom.

So pluck them, dainty maiden,
 This clear September day,
 'Tis Autumn, but your presence
 Brings back the charm of May.
 If fruits are fair in Autumn,
 Alas ! for woman's doom !
 'Tis only Spring which girlhood crowns
 With the beauty of its bloom !

Ay ! pluck the purple clusters,
 By their own wealth oppressed,
 With pleasure beaming in your face,
 And gladness at your breast.
 Pluck Autumn's fruit in girlhood's prime,
 And let no shade of gloom,
 With coming years intrude to dim
 The light of girlhood's bloom !

T. ESCOTT.



ONLY THE MARE.

WHEN one opens a suspicious-looking envelope and finds something about 'Mr. Shopley's respectful compliments' on the inside of the flap, the chances are that Mr. Shopley is hungering for what we have Ovid's authority for terming *irritamenta malorum*. Not wishing to have my appetite for breakfast spoiled, I did not pursue my researches into a communication of this sort which was amongst my letters on a certain morning in November; but turned over the pile until the familiar caligraphy of Bertie Peyton caught my eye: for Bertie was Nellie's brother, and Nellie Peyton, it had been decided, would shortly cease to be Nellie Peyton; a transformation for which I was the person chiefly responsible. Bertie's communication was therefore seized with avidity. It ran as follows:—

'The Lodge, Holmesdale.

'MY DEAR CHARLIE,

'I sincerely hope that you have no important engagements just at present, as I want you down here most particularly.

'You know that there was a small race-meeting at Bibury the other day. I rode over on Little Lady, and found a lot of the 140th Dragoons there; that conceited young person Blankney amongst the number. Now, although Blankney has a very considerable personal knowledge of the habits and manners of the ass, he doesn't know much about horses; and for that reason he saw fit to read us a lecture on breeding and training, pointing his moral and adorning his tale with a reference to my mare—whose pedigree, you know, is above suspicion. After, however, he had kindly informed us what a

thoroughbred horse ought to be, he looked at Little Lady and said, "Now, I shouldn't think that thing was thoroughbred!" It ended by my matching her against that great raw-boned chestnut of his: three and a half miles over the steeplechase course, to be run at the Holmesdale Meeting, on the 5th December.

'As you may guess, I didn't want to win or lose a lot of money, and when he asked what the match should be for, I suggested "20l. a-side." "Hardly worth while making a fuss for 20l.!" he said, rather sneerily. "120l., if you like!" I answered, rather angrily, hardly meaning what I said; but he pounced on the offer. Of course I couldn't retract, and so, very stupidly, I plunged deeper into the mire, and made several bets with the fellows who were round us. They gave me 3 to 1 against the mare, but I stand to lose nearly 500l.

'You see now what I want. I ride quite 12 stone, as you know; the mare is to carry 11 stone, and you can just manage that nicely. I know you'll come if you can, and if you telegraph I'll meet you.

'Your's ever,

'BERTIE PEYTON.

'P.S.—Nellie sends love, and hopes to see you. No one is here, but the aunt is coming shortly.'

I was naturally anxious to oblige him, and luckily had nothing to keep me in town; so the afternoon saw me rapidly speeding southwards, and the evening, comfortably domiciled at The Lodge.

Bertie, who resided there with his sister, was not a rich man. 500l. was a good deal more than he could afford to lose, and poor

little Nellie was in a great flutter of anxiety and excitement in consequence of her brother's rashness. As for the mare, she could gallop and jump; and though we had no means of ascertaining the abilities of Blankney's chestnut, we had sufficient faith in our Little Lady to enable us to come 'up to the scratch smiling;' and great hopes that we should be enabled to laugh at the result in strict accordance with the permission given in the old adage, 'Let those laugh who win.'

It was not very pleasant to rise at an abnormal hour every morning, and arrayed in great coats and comforters sufficient for six people, to rush rapidly about the country; but it was necessary. I was a little too heavy, and we could not afford to throw away any weight, nor did I wish to have my saddle reduced to the size of a cheese-plate, as would have been my fate had I been unable to reduce myself. Breakfast, presided over by Nellie, compensated for all matutinal discomforts; and then she came round to the stables to give her equine prototype an encouraging pat and a few words of advice and endearment which I verily believe the gallant little mare understood, for it rubbed its nose against her shoulder as though it would say, 'Just you leave it in my hands—or, rather, to my feet—and I'll make it all right!' Then we started for our gallop, Bertie riding a steady old iron-grey hunter.

The fourth of December arrived, and the mare's condition was splendid. 'As fit as a fiddle,' was the verdict of Smithers, a veterinary surgeon who had done a good deal of training in his time, and who superintended our champion's preparation; and though we were ignorant of the precise degree of fitness to which fiddles usually

attain, he seemed pleased, and so, consequently, were we. Unfortunately on this morning Bertie's old hunter proved to be very lame, so I was forced to take my last gallop by myself; and with visions of success on the morrow, I passed rapidly through the keen air over the now familiar way; for the course was within a couple of miles of the house, and so we had the great advantage of being able to accustom the mare to the very journey she would have to take.

Bertie was in a field at the back of the stables when I neared home again. 'Come on!' he shouted, pointing to a nasty, hog-backed stile, which separated us. I gave Little Lady her head, and she cantered up to it, lighting on the other side like a very bird! Bertie didn't speak as I trotted up to him, but he looked up into my face with a triumphant smile more eloquent than words.

'You've given her enough, haven't you?' he remarked, patting her neck, as I dismounted in the yard.

'You've given her enough,' usually signifies 'you've given her too much.' But I opined not, and we walked round to the house tolerably well convinced that the approaching banking transactions would be on the right side of the book.

Despite a walk with Nellie, and the arrival of a pile of music from town, the afternoon passed rather slowly; perhaps we were too anxious to be cheerful. To make matters worse, dinner was to be postponed till past eight, for the aunt was coming, and Nellie was afraid the visitor would be offended if they did not wait for her.

'You look very bored and tired, sir!' said Nellie, pouting prettily; 'I believe you'd yawn if it wasn't rude!'

I assured her that I could not, under any circumstances, be guilty of such an enormity.

'It's just a quarter past seven, We'll go and meet the carriage, and then perhaps you'll be able to keep awake until dinner-time!' and so with a look of dignity which would have been very effective if the merry smile in her eyes had been less apparent, the little lady swept out of the room; to return shortly arrayed in furs, and a most coquettish-looking hat, and the smallest and neatest possible pair of Balmoral boots, which in their efforts to appear strong and sturdy only made their extreme delicacy more decided.

'Come, sleepy boy!' said she, holding out a grey-gloved hand. I rose submissively, and followed her out of the snug drawing-room to the open air.

Bertie was outside, smoking.

'We are going to meet the aunt, dear,' explained Nellie. 'I'm afraid she'll be cross, because it's so cold.'

'She's not quite so inconsequent as that, I should fancy; but it is cold, and isn't the ground hard!' I said.

'It is hard!' cried Bertie, stamping vigorously. 'By Jove! I hope it's not going to freeze!' and afflicted by the notion—for a hard frost would have rendered it necessary to postpone the races—he hurried off to the stables, to consult one of the men who was weather-wise.

Some stone steps led from the terrace in front of the house to the lawn; at either end of the top-step was a large globe of stone, and on to one of these thoughtless little Nellie climbed. I stretched out my hand, fearing that the weather had made it slippery, but before I could reach her she slipped and fell.

'You rash little creature!' I

said, expecting that she would spring up lightly.

'Oh! my foot!' she moaned; and gave a little shriek of pain as she put it to the ground.

I took her in my arms, and, summoning her maid, carried her to the drawing-room.

'Take off her boot,' I said to the girl, but Nellie could not bear to have her foot touched, and feebly moaned that her arm hurt her.

'Oh! pray send for a doctor, sir!' implored the maid, while Nellie only breathed heavily, with half-closed eyes; and horribly frightened I rushed off, hardly waiting to say a word to the poor little sufferer.

'Whatever is the matter?' Bertie cried, as I burst into the harness-room.

'Where's the doctor?' I replied, hastily. 'Nellie's hurt herself—sprained her ankle, and hurt her arm—broken it, perhaps!'

'How? When?' he asked.

'There's no time to explain. She slipped down. Where's the doctor?'

'Our doctor is ill, and has no substitute. There's no one nearer than Lawson, at Oakley, and that's twelve miles, very nearly.'

'Then I must ride at once,' I replied.

'Saddle my horse as quickly as possible,' said Bertie to the groom.

'He's lame, sir, can't move!' the man replied, and I remembered that it was so.

'Put a saddle on one of the carriage horses—anything so long as there's no delay.'

'They're out, sir! Gone to the station. There's nothing in the stable—only the mare; and to gallop her to Oakley over the ground as it is to-night, will pretty well do for her chance to-morrow—to say nothing of the twelve miles back again. The carriage will be home in less than an hour, sir,' the man remonstrated.

'It may be, you don't know, the trains are so horridly unpunctual. Saddle the mare, Jarvis, as quickly as you can—every minute may be of the utmost value!' As Bertie spoke the *faintest* look of regret showed itself on his face for a second; for of course he knew that such a journey would very materially affect, if it did not entirely destroy, the mare's chance.

Jarvis, who I think had been speculating, very reluctantly took down the saddle and bridle from their pegs, but I snatched them from his arms, and assisted by Bertie, was leading her out of the stable in a very few seconds.

'Hurry on! Never mind the mare—good thing she's in condition,' said Bertie, who only thought now of his sister. 'I'll go and see the girl.'

'I can cut across the fields, can't I, by the cross roads?' I asked, settling in the saddle.

'No! no! Keep to the highway; it's safer at night. Go on!' I heard him call as I went at a gallop down the cruelly hard road.

The ground rang under the mare's feet, and in spite of all my anxiety for Nellie I could not help feeling one pang of regret for Little Lady, whose free, bounding action, augured well for what her chances would have been on the morrow—chances which I felt were rapidly dying out; for if this journey didn't lame her nothing would. Stones had just been put down as a matter of course; but there was no time for picking the way, and taking tight hold of her head we sped on.

About a mile from the Lodge I came to the cross-roads. Before me was a long vista of stones—regular rocks, so imperfectly were they broken: to the right was the smoother and softer pathway over the fields—perfect going in com-

parison to the road. Just over this fence, a hedge, and with hardly another jump I should come again into the highway, saving quite two miles by the cut. Bertie had said 'Don't,' but probably he had spoken thoughtlessly, and it was evidently the best thing to do, for the time I saved might be of the greatest value to poor little suffering Nellie! I pulled up, and drew the mare back to the opposite hedge. She knew her work thoroughly. Three bounds took her across the road; she rose—the next moment I was on my back, shot some distance into the field, and she was struggling up from the ground. There had been a post and rail whose existence I had not suspected, placed some six feet from the hedge on the landing side. She sprang up, no legs were broken; and I, a good deal shaken and confused, rose to my feet, wondering what to do next? I had not had time to collect my thoughts when I heard the rattle of a trap on the road; it speedily approached, and the moonlight revealed the jolly features of old Tom Heathfield, a friendly farmer.

'Accident, sir?' he asked, pulling up. 'What! Mr. Vaughan!' as he caught sight of my face. 'What's the—why! that ain't the mare, *surelie*?'

All the neighbourhood was in a ferment of excitement about the races, and the sight of Little Lady in such a place at such a time struck horror to the honest old farmer.

'Yes, it is—I'm sorry to say. Miss Peyton has met with an accident. I was going for the doctor, and unfortunately there was nothing else in the stable.'

'You was going to Oakley, I s'pose, sir? It'll be ruination to the mare. Miss Peyton hurt herself! I'll bowl over, sir; it won't

take long; this little horse o' mine can trot a good 'un; and I can bring the doctor with me. The fences, there, is mended with wire. You'd cut the mare to pieces.'

'I can't say how obliged to you I am——'

'Glad of the opportunity of obliging Miss Peyton, sir; she's a real lady!' He was just starting when he checked himself. 'There's a little public-house about a hundred yards further on; if you don't mind waiting there I'll send Smithers to look at the mare. I pass his house. All right, sir.'

His rough little cob started off at a pace for which I had not given it credit; and I slowly followed, leading the mare towards the glimmering light which Heathfield had pointed out. My charge stepped out well, and I didn't think that there was anything wrong, though glad, of course, to have a professional opinion.

A man was hanging about the entrance to the public-house, and with his assistance the mare was bestowed in a kind of shed, half cow-house, half stable; and as the inside of the establishment did not look by any means inviting, I lit a cigar and lounged about outside, awaiting the advent of Smithers.

He didn't arrive; and in the course of wandering to and fro I found myself against a window. Restlessly I was just moving away when a voice inside the room repeated the name of *Blankney*. I started, and, turning round, looked in.

It was a small apartment, with a sanded floor, and two persons were seated on chairs before the fire conversing earnestly. One of them was a middle-aged man, clad in a brown great-coat with a profusion of fur collar and cuffs which it would scarcely be libel

to term 'mangy.' He was the owner of an unwholesome, pasty face, decorated as to the chin with a straggling crop of bristles which he would have probably termed an imperial.

'Wust year I ever 'ad!' he exclaimed (and a broken pane in the window enabled me to hear distinctly), 'The Two Thousand 'orse didn't run; got in deep over the Derby; Hascot was hawful; and though I had a moral for the Leger, it come to grief.'

His own morals, judging from his appearance and conversation, appeared to have followed the example of that for the Leger.

'I can't follow your plans about this race down here, though,' said his companion, a younger man, who seemed to hold the first speaker in great awe despite his confessions of failure. 'Don't you say that this young Blankney's horse can't get the distance?'

'I do. He never was much good, I 'ear; never won nothing, though he's run hurdle-races two or three times; and since Phil Kelly's been preparing of 'im for this race he's near about broke down. His legs swells up like bolsters after his gallops; and he can't get three miles at all, I don't believe, without he's pulled up and let lean agin something on the journey to rest hisself.'

'And yet you're backing him?'

'And yet I'm backing of him.'

'This young Peyton's mare can't be worse?' said the younger man, interrogatively.

'That mare, it's my belief, would stand at eight to one for the Grand National if she was entered, and some of the swells saw 'er. She's a real good 'un!' replied the man with the collar.

'I see. You've got at her jockey. You're an artful one, you are!'

As the jockey to whom they

alluded, I was naturally much interested.

'No, I ain't done that, neither. He's a gentleman, and it's no use talkin' to such as 'im. They ain't got the sense to take up a good thing when they see it—though, for the matter o' that, most of the professionals is as bad as the gentlemen. All's fair in love and war,' says I; 'and this 'ere's war.'

'Does Blankney know how bad his horse is?'

'No, bless yer! That ain't Phil Kelly's game. (Kelly was, I knew, the man who had charge of my opponent's horse.)

'Well, then, just explain, will you; for I can't see.'

From the recesses of his garment the elder man pulled out a short stick about fifteen inches in length, at the end of which was a loop of string; and from another pocket he produced a small paper parcel.

'D'yer know what that is? That's a "twitch." D'yer know what that is? That's medicine. I love this 'ere young feller's mare so much I'm a-goin' to give it some nicey medicine myself; and this is the right stuff. I've been up to the 'ouse to-day, and can find my way into the stable to-night when it's all quiet. Just slip this loop over 'er lip, and she'll open 'er mouth. Down goes the pill, and as it goes down the money goes into my pocket. Them officer fellers and their friends have been backing Blankney's 'orse; but Phil Kelly will take care that they hear at the last moment that he's no good. Then they'll rush to lay odds on the mare—and the mare won't win.'

They laughed, and nudged each other in the side, and I felt a mighty temptation to rush into the room and nudge their heads with my fist. Little Lady's delicate lips, which Nellie had so often

petted, to be desecrated by the touch of such villains as these!

While struggling to restrain myself a hand was laid on my shoulder, and, turning round, I saw Smithers. We proceeded to the stable; and I hastily recounted to him what had happened, and what I had heard, as he examined the mare by the aid of a bull's-eye lantern. He passed his hand very carefully over her, whilst I looked on with anxious eyes.

'She's knocked a bit of skin off here, you see.' He pointed to a place a little below her knee, and, drawing a small box from his pocket, anointed the leg. 'But she's all right. All right, ain't you, old lady?' he said, patting her; and his cheerful tone convinced me that he was satisfied. 'We'll lead her home. I'll go with you, sir; and it's easy to take means to prevent any foul play to-night.'

When we reached home the doctor was there, and pronounced that, with the exception of a sprained ankle, Nellie had sustained no injury.

Rejoicing exceedingly, we proceeded to the stable; Heathfield, who heard my story, and who was delighted at the prospect of some fun, asking permission to accompany us.

Collars had doubtless surveyed the premises carefully, for he arrived about eleven o'clock, and clambered quietly and skilfully into the hayloft above the stable, after convincing himself that all was quiet inside. He opened the trap-door, and down came a foot and leg, feeling about to find a resting-place on the partition which divided Little Lady's loose box from the other stalls. Bertie and I took hold of the leg, and assisted him down, to his intense astonishment; while Heathfield and a groom gave chase to, and ulti-

mately captured his friend, the watcher on the threshold.

* * * * *

'If I'm well enough to do *anything* I'm well enough to lie on the sofa; and there's really *no* difference between a sofa and an easy-chair—if my foot is resting—and I'm sure the carriage is *easier* than *any* chair; and it can't matter about my foot being an inch or two higher or lower—and as for shaking, that's all nonsense. It's very unkind *indeed* of you not to want to take me; and if you won't, directly you're gone I'll get up, and walk about, and stamp!'

Thus Nellie, in answer to advice that she should remain at home. How it ended may easily be guessed; and though we tried to be dignified, as we drove along, to punish her for her wilfulness, her pathetic little expressions of sorrow that she should 'fall down, and hurt herself, and be such a trouble to everybody,' and child-like assurances that she would 'try not to do so any more,' soon made us smile, and forget our half-pretended displeasure. So with the aunt to take care of her, in case Bertie and I were insufficient, we reached the course.

The first three races were run, and then the card said:—

3.15 Match, £120 a side, over the Steeple-chase Course, about three miles and a half.

1. Mr. Blankney, 140th R. D. G., ch. h. Jibboom, 11st. 7lb., rose, black and gold cap.
2. Mr. Peyton, b. m. Little Lady, 11st. sky blue, white cap.

Blankney was sitting on the regimental drag, arrayed in immaculate boots and breeches, and, after the necessary weighing ceremony had been gone through, he mounted the great Jibboom, which Phil Kelly had been leading about:

the latter gentleman had a rather anxious look on his face; but Blankney evidently thought he was on a good one, and nodded confidently to his friends on the drag as he lurched down the course.

Little Lady was brought up to me, Smithers being in close attendance.

'I *shall* be so glad if you win,' Nellie found opportunity to whisper.

'What will you give me?' I greedily inquire.

'*Anything* you ask me,' is the reply; and my heart beats high as, having thrown off my light wrapper and mounted, Little Lady bounds down the course, and glides easily over the hurdle in front of the stand.

Bertie and Smithers were waiting at the starting-place; and, having shaken hands with Blankney, to whom Bertie introduced me, I went apart to exchange the last few sentences with my friends.

Bertie is a trifle pale, but confident; and Smithers seems to have a large supply of the latter quality. In however high esteem we hold our own opinions, we are glad of professional advice when it comes to the push; and I seek instructions.

'No, sir, don't you wait on him. Go away as hard as you can directly the flag drops. I don't like the look of that chestnut's legs—or, rather, I *do* like the look of them for our sakes. Go away as hard as ever you can; but take it easy at the fences; and, excuse me, sir, but just let the mare have her head when she jumps, and she'll be all right. People talk about "lifting horses at their fences." I only knew one man who could do it, and he made mistakes.'

I nod; smiling as cheerfully as anxiety will permit me. The flag falls, and Little Lady skims

over the ground, the heavy chestnut thundering away behind.

Over the first fence—a hedge—and then across a ploughed field: rather hard going, but not nearly so bad as I expected it would have been: the mare moving beautifully. Just as I reach the second fence a boy rushes across the course, baulking us; and before I can set her going again Jibboom has come up level, and is over into the grass beyond a second before us; but I shoot past and again take up the running. Before us are some posts and rails—rather nasty ones; the mare tops them, and the chestnut hits them hard with all four legs. Over more grass; and in front, flanked on either side by a crowd of white faces, is the water-jump. I catch hold of the bridle and steady her; and then, with just one touch of the whip—needless—she rises, flies through the air, and lands lightly on the other side. Half a minute after I hear a heavy splash; but when, after jumping the hurdle into the course, I glance over my shoulder, the chestnut is still pounding away behind. As I skim along past the stand the first time round and the line of carriages opposite, I catch sight of a waving white handkerchief: it is Nellie; and

my confused glimpse imperfectly reveals Bertie and Smithers standing on the box.

I had seen visions of a finish, in which a certain person clad in a light-blue jacket had shot ahead just in the nick of time, and landed the race by consummate jockeyship after a neck-and-neck struggle for the last quarter of a mile. This did not happen, however, for, as I afterwards learned, the chestnut refused a fence before he had gone very far, and, having at last been got over, came to grief at the posts and rails the second time round. Little Lady cantered in alone; Blankney strolling up some time afterwards.

There is no need to make record of Bertie's delight at the success. We messed next day with the 140th. Blankney and his brethren were excessively friendly, and seemed pleased and satisfied; as most assuredly were we. Blankney opines that he went rather too fast at the timber; but a conviction seemed to be gaining ground towards the close of the evening that he had not gone fast enough at any period of the race.

And for Nellie? She kept her promise, and granted my request; and very soon after the ankle is well we shall require the services of other horses—grey ones!

ALFRED E. T. WATSON.



WE FOUR.

WE were sitting in conclave. It was not at all a remarkable thing for us four sisters to be sitting in conclave, because we did it over everything, from a proposal of marriage to the choice of a new bonnet (the latter event of much more frequent occurrence than the former), but somehow today we seemed to be more in conclave than usual. No wonder either, when the absorbing topic under discussion was the approaching proposal of marriage for Joan, from our cousin, Max Carew—not that we were calling him cousin then; when we did so it was only because he was present. He was only a second cousin either (almost as good as no relation at all), and I can vouch that none of us ever thought of him as a cousin.

Joan was suffering so acutely from the reaction consequent upon her recent Edinburgh gaieties, that she did not work, or even pretend to do so. She only sat idly staring at our needles, as she enlarged upon her visit to the married sister of Max; told us how Max himself had come every day from his chambers in the city, to take her to see some new lion, and every night had escorted her to the opera, or a concert, or theatre. While Joan rehearsed these dissipation of hers, and sighed over their recollection, Dorothy and Patience and I worked away all the harder, just to show we didn't care a bit about them all in the way of being jealous. We had had our turns in Edinburgh, when Max had been pleasant and attentive to each; and though we had never had such tales of his devotion to bring back as Joan had

now (and we all knew it), we would sooner die than recall the fact aloud before her. Of course we resented it a little—that was only natural—but nothing showed this except an increased attention to our sewing, and a decreased attention to Joan's narrations. I gleaned one amiable little pleasure to myself. Whenever Joan had wrought a narrative up just to the point for introducing some unusually suggestive attention from Max, I would either lose my needle and make a general and lengthy commotion, or I would turn to Patience and discuss at great length some sewing question of not the slightest moment to either of us. Why should Max have chosen Joan before anyone had chosen either Dorothy, or Patience, or me? She was by no means the most attractive of us. She wasn't half so sensible or domestic as Dorothy, nor half so handsome as Patience; nor half so—well, at any rate she wasn't *nicer* than me! And the whole three of us ought to have been married before Joan. There was Dorothy, our eldest, in her corner of the couch on Joan's right, she was eight and twenty, only nobody knew it but ourselves—not even those prying census men, for the figures after our names got jumbled up in a manner which couldn't help having a lowering effect on them. Then there was Patience opposite her, sitting, as usual, very upright in her chair; she was the beauty of the family as everyone knew—as she knew, at any rate. And there was myself on Joan's left, quite on the shady side of twenty, which Joan hadn't

reached yet. Why, of course we all ought to have been married before her. Yet we had now to entertain the prospect of officiating at her wedding first of all. It *was* mortifying, to say the very least of it. Yet the fact had a redeeming point, too. It was better for one to be married than none. We had been four grown-up sisters for a good many years now (the worst of Max was that he knew exactly *how* many years—cousins always know those unpleasant things!) and it was growing samey. Four was such an alarming number. Yes, after all, it was a thing to thank Providence for, that Max was going to marry one of us; though I know in my own mind that Providence would have been more heartily thanked if Max would have married me, or next best to me—one of our elders.

'What's the matter, Barbara?' inquired Patience, suddenly, I suppose because she saw my eyebrows raised and my mouth down at the corners.

'I was thinking what a good thing it is that there is the probability of Max marrying one of us. We are such an overwhelming number. It must require superhuman courage in a man to propose to one of four marriageable sisters; he must feel like proposing to them all.'

'Why is it,' mused Dorothy, putting in her needle very deliberately, 'that four *should* seem such an enormous number when it bears upon unmarried sisters? We shall not seem even half so many when we are three.'

'And the others go off so much more easily when one is married,' I put in, consolingly. 'The married one marries off one more—of course. That's her first duty. Then there are two houses to visit; and if one unmarried one stays at each, they marry directly.'

'Yes, I do believe,' said Patience, with meditation, 'that many matches are brought about through visiting a brother-in-law.'

'It often happens, too,' asserted Joan, with an air of experience, 'that the best man at a wedding falls in love with—'

'The best bridesmaid. That always happens. Which of us will it be?'

Patience, from her lofty pedestal, looked scornfully across at me when I made that remark. Of course, she would be the best bridesmaid as far as appearance went—she knew that; but then Patience was—well, her godfather and godmothers at her baptism had not been gifted with any remarkable prescience.

'I suppose Dorothy will be the first of us to marry. She naturally ought to be,' sighed Joan, with a sentimental air of resignation for which I could have choked her, because she evidently felt so sure of being the first herself *unnaturally*.

'No: it would be Patience first,' replied Dorothy, with just as much resignation.

But Patience sighed resignedly, too, and said that under any circumstances (she didn't specify the circumstances) she should be sorry to take precedence of her elder sister. Of course it sounded very well, but I would not like to have tested her. They didn't assign me any right to be married before Joan, but if they had I should have answered with as much self-abnegation as they had displayed, and should have meant it just about as much.

'It was so kind of Max to bring me home, wasn't it?' inquired Joan, naively, 'and he was *so* careful of me on the journey.'

'He certainly has the knack of making things pleasant for one,' spoke Dorothy, 'and making one

pleased with oneself as well as with him.'

'The oftener one sees him the better then,' said I, sententiously.

'Yes,' assented Patience, 'I'm not sorry that he is coming next week.'

'I suppose you are quite sure he said he was coming; eh, Joan?' inquired I; always the sceptical one of the family.

'Quite sure,' returned Joan, resuming the lackadaisical pose of her head; 'and quite sure that he told me on the way home that he had something *particular* to say to us—he didn't say to me, because it would have been so very marked.'

'It is a pleasant change to have a gentleman about the house for a bit,' put in Dorothy, with placidity.

'It always seemed so nice to have him about the house in Edinburgh,' sighed Joan, 'and he was always so indulgent to me; for ever planning some amusement for me, or some change.'

'I don't think Max very nice-looking,' said Patience, leisurely veering round because Joan appropriated him, 'though he is passable. His mouth is wide.'

'But, oh, his moustache quite hides it,' exclaimed Joan, with deprecation; 'and it is such a handsome moustache, isn't it, girls?'

'I never particularly noticed it,' said Dorothy, following the lead of Patience; 'all moustaches seem the same to me—just useful to hide an ugly mouth.'

'And Carew is such a good name, isn't it?' inquired Joan again, with a pitying smile at us, 'so different from Pendlethorpe.'

'In two volumes instead of three.'

That was the only retort she either elicited or deserved.

Then somebody said—and I

cannot be sure who it was—that it would be well for one of us to write to Max, and say that we should expect him by the afternoon train every day next week—I mean of course we should expect him every day until we saw him. Then naturally the question arose which should write.

'I suppose I ought,' said Joan, complacently.

'Why so?' asked I, with a snap. 'Who so fit as Dorothy—being the eldest?'

'Or Patience?' proposed Dorothy; 'she writes the best hand.'

Patience accepted the position under protest; yet after all the task was tacitly conceded to Joan. And then and there I made a firm determination not to help her with a single idea, as I regretted having done on many previous occasions.

'I should think, Joan,' said I, with great *empressment*, when I had relieved my mind by this resolution, 'Max cannot be coming to see you, because you have been together so lately. I wonder which of us he is coming to see—Dorothy, I expect.'

Dorothy smiled at the idea. But Patience looked unutterable discernment about whom she thought it more natural he should come to see.

Then, after a good while, we fell back into our first chat about Joan's wedding; for, though we didn't quite see the fun of giving tamely up to our youngest sister the only suitor who seemed to be forthcoming, we were too fond of each other to regret the probable triumph of one; and too fond of ourselves not to be quite aware that the marriage of one—even though that one must be the youngest—would be a benefit to all. So we discussed it all as a definite thing for Joan, and hid our own private opinions. We

chose the dresses of both bride and bridesmaids; marked out the tour; arranged the furnishing, and magnanimously ceded to our eldest the first invitation to the new brother-in-law. Then we went to tea with good appetites, and to bed with easy minds.

Any day next week might Max pop in upon us to say this particular thing; so even Monday was not too soon to expect him. We did not give much publicity to our special expectations; yet, though our preparations were surreptitiously conducted, I've every reason now to feel that there wasn't one of us who did not understand the practical effect of a certain unacknowledged hope in the others; but who, respecting the motive with that feeling which engenders wondrous kindness, kept the secret honourably.

Joan had brought from Edinburgh a glowing description of the little Dolly Varden aprons which had just come into fashion, and had minutely described one with pink trimmings which Max had admired. This narrative had sunk deep into my mind, and from that time I devoted all my leisure moments—in solitude and my own room—to the manufacture of a similar one. Oh! the heartburnings I suffered when steps were heard in the passage while I sat closeted there, with a lapful of ribbon-ends and loops, and an open bandbox at my feet ready to swallow the materials *en masse* on the approach of prying eyes. But, above all things, oh! the nervousness of appearing in it first on that Monday evening just before the train from Edinburgh was due, for of course it would never have done to keep it *perdu* until Max had actually arrived, and then have had suddenly to appear in it, while the girls interchanged glances and put me out for the

whole evening. I could not venture that, so I boldly put it on and went into the drawing-room, assuming an expression that was intended to be unconscious, but was really defiant in the extreme, and rapidly uttering some very irrelevant observation for the purpose of turning everyone's attention from my new and startling garment. But the remark and the expression of countenance were alike depressing failures. I might just as well have rushed in exclaiming, at the very top of my voice, 'Look here! Look at my new apron! I made it all myself, in secret, and at great expense; and for no earthly purpose but to captivate Max.' I might just as well have said it out that way in full, so plainly was it repeated in all the faces. Stupids! The more I tried to eye them down in my intense defiance, the more the six eyes glared at it. The bows grew limp under the trying scrutiny. I hopelessly felt that no such a caricature of a person had ever before rushed into their midst armed (to no purpose) with an irrelevant observation. The apron grew, to my disordered fancy, ugly and enormous, and I could with supreme satisfaction to myself have pitched it on the fire. But then what a defeat that would have been; and after all Max *had* admired one just like it. If I could but just live down this first ordeal, presently, perhaps, my Dolly Varden would assume its natural proportions, and my mind its natural equilibrium. I went boldly into the midst of the astonished eyes, and then I saw my opportunity and seized it. With one *coup d'œil* I took in the fact that Patience had made an investment, too. She had at least a guinea's worth of extra plaits on her head this afternoon for the first time; and these served beautifully as a

means of removing the other four glaring eyes from my pink bows. The plaits weren't becoming to Patience, their falseness being quite evident in a strong light; but I didn't mention this in consequence of the relief they had given me.

'What have you got new, Dorothy?' I asked, growing presently courageous, 'plaits or aprons? Or have you branched out into a new line?'

'I have branched out into a new line,' acquiesced Dorothy, good-humouredly, 'and got *nothing*.'

'I wouldn't,' put in Patience, a little bit severely, 'stoop to hide my investments, if I were you, Dorothy' (which was quite true, for Patience never stooped).

And we didn't say a word more, though there upon the grate stood the little drawing-room kettle, with china handle, which she had been into town that morning on purpose to buy. House-keeping always was Dorothy's weak point, and Max was known to be very keen in appreciating the convenient or elegant appliances of a meal.

Well, every day that week, at the same time, we prepared for Max; in our plaits, and pink bows, and with tea laid for five, and the glistening little kettle singing on the trivet. Certainly Joan didn't don anything new; but then she had good cause, and, besides that, made up for it in another way. She had good cause thus. She had been amply provided with everything new for her visit to Edinburgh; and, as she felt those were the very dresses which had captivated Max, what need had she for others? And she made up for it in this way. All the week she devoted herself to beautifying our garden, in anticipation of the admiration it would win from Max, when she

could say in her soft voice, and with her provokingly pretty, childish airs, 'I manage the garden, Max.' What a joke that gardening was to me—looking on—and how delighted I was to see that she expended upon it twenty times as much manual labour as had exhausted me over my Dolly Varden. Five days out of the six passed, and the preparations had so far been wasted; except that they had grown familiar to us now, and we wore them without uncomfortable consciousness. But on the Saturday morning, when we came down to breakfast, there lay one of Max Carew's letters on the table—unmistakeable with its handsome crest and bold address, 'Miss Pendlethorpe.'

'Good gracious!' I cried, with the keenest enjoyment, 'It's Dorothy he means, after all.'

'Don't be a goose, Barbara,' reproved Patience, who had entered the room with me, and now advanced with her stately step to look over my shoulder. 'Of course, if he writes to say he is coming, he would naturally address to Dorothy, as we have no mother.'

'And if he is in love with her, he would naturally address to her too,' I added, not quite seeing why Dorothy should be laid upon the shelf just yet.

'Come, Dorothy, don't keep us waiting,' cried Joan; 'I'm in an unbearable state of excitement.'

But Dorothy would not hurry. I believe in my own mind that she preferred the suspense to the certainty. So, as we saw this, we made a great effort to hide our own eagerness, and began weakly and abortively to talk on other topics.

I never remember noticing before how desperately slow Dorothy is in opening a letter. I thought she never would have

finished breaking the seal of this one; and, when at last it was broken, she deliberately looked between the leaves, and turned the sheet round twice.

'O, the signature is there all right,' remarked Patience, just a little tartly. 'What comes before the signature?'

'Of course he only writes to say when he is coming,' returned Dorothy, with indifference so supreme and unnatural that it was plain enough to see it was feigned. 'I suppose you can all wait while I read it,' she added, looking at us over the paper with great aggravating enjoyment.

And to prove how utterly indifferent we all were to the contents of this absurd letter, we turned entirely away, and helped ourselves to tongue and bread and butter *ad libitum*—just for two moments and a half. Then somehow we found our attention again concentrating itself on Dorothy, who was reading steadily now, and in utter silence. I couldn't help it—I didn't try, but I feel quite sure that I couldn't have helped it if I *had* tried—I went near enough behind her to read over her shoulder, and the first two words I saw gave me an extraordinary sensation.

'My wife.'

My heart bumped and thumped against my side. Which was it to be? Sure to be Joan. Yet, after all, it might be Dorothy. No; it would be Patience, of course—which of us looked anything beside Patience? Yet, why not me? I could remember hundreds of flattering and affectionate speeches Max had made to me. It was just as likely to be—

It wasn't in human power (feminine) to resist temptation any longer. While Dorothy read on, not vouchsafing us a word of explanation, we tacitly burst the

bonds of polite conventionality, and—one at a time first, then altogether daringly—hovered so near that we could distinguish the words. I don't know whether Patience and Joan read it all straight through as I did, or whether they stopped dead at the first line as I felt inclined to do. All I know is that I read it through, from the ominous first line, MY—DEAR—COUSINS, down to the flourish after the signature; and felt not at all mollified by the performance. Dear me, couldn't he have chosen one to write to, and not swallowed up our individuality in such a distasteful gulp? Well, after saying that—MY DEAR COUSINS—he said he had hoped to be able to run over to tell us his news himself, but had been unavoidably prevented. On the first of the next month he was going to marry Minnie Frere, whom Joan would recollect having met in Edinburgh, and he was sure we should give him our valued sympathy, and kind and generous good wishes. His greatest desire just then, he added, was that we would extend to his wife the delightful friendship which had always been so much prized by him. I believe there was more—lots more!—but wasn't that enough? We simultaneously attacked our breakfast, without uttering a word which related to Max; with faces set to an unnatural expression of beaming self-satisfaction, and voices tuned to joyous hilarity. I never discoursed so jocosely about an egg before in all my life; and never (either before or since) heard Patience jest so sportively with Dorothy upon the sugar requisite for her second cup of tea. Even Joan turned with a lively little start to the window now and then, and said 'it was going to rain,' which remark, though not strikingly original,

elicited mirthful responses from all of us. It was then that I realized the eminent forbearance of my nature, for I never made even the most distant allusion to the fact that a shower would be beneficial to the seeds on which she had lately been lavishing the bulk of her property.

There was one circumstance attending the arrival of that letter which gave me unbounded satisfaction. It had *not* come by the afternoon post, to find us all expecting Max himself. My apron—with all its pink bows opened jauntily—was at any rate out of sight in my bottom drawer; and this congratulation was not even marred by the consideration that Patience reaped an equal benefit. She could never have borne her position half so well if the new guinea plait had not been—I suppose in the same sarcophagus in which it lay undisturbed for weeks after that. Certainly Dorothy's new kettle was asserting itself conspicuously by warbling away on the fire; but we didn't mind so much, because a few minutes before, in consequence of Dorothy's putting it down pettishly in the very hottest part of the fire, its china handle had cracked all across and fallen half away, so that it looked decapitated enough now to take away its sting.

So we went on through breakfast; but, as I had dismally foreseen, that jovial state of affairs could not last. Of course it was I (it always is, they say) who made the first savage thrust; the rest followed as a natural sequence. The letter had got by some means (nobody seemed to touch it, nobody seemed even to see it, yet it *did* crop up first by one of us then another) near my plate; and in a weak and ungovernable flash of spleen I spoke aloud the thought which it suggested to me.

'What a pity for us that Max was "unavoidably prevented running over to tell us the news himself." Should not we have had a glorious opportunity of pouring out a libation of our "valued sympathy, and kind and generous good wishes?" Judge of our expression! Four devoted maiden cousins offering unlimited love by proxy to the wife we've every cause to bear malice against—and know nothing about either.'

'I know her,' interposed Joan, with a fragile attempt at a laugh, 'but I never guessed—anything particular about her. Max was quite as—was *more* attentive to me.'

'I feel a great contempt,' Patience said, turning with unusual graciousness to Joan, 'for a man who behaves the same to every girl in whose society he may chance to be. His affections are not worth winning.'

'They are not worth the winning, let them go,' said I, with quite as much magnanimity as if the choice had been given me of either retaining or letting them go, according to my fancy.

'Well, I feel relieved that he is not coming himself,' said Dorothy, placidly, 'though it may seem unfeeling to say it. It is always a constraint to have a solitary gentleman in the house to amuse, and no other visitor.'

'I wonder what the unavoidable preventive is,' said I; 'I never knew him hesitate about racing over the country where he chose, letting his profession wait upon his pleasure.'

'He always said it was such a treat to him to come here,' said Joan, relapsing into a sigh; 'he pretended it was the very most enjoyable visit he ever paid.'

'Flattery!' retorted Patience, 'I've no patience' (which she hadn't) 'with men who pay one



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so much particular attention that they make one believe things, quite against one's will, you know.'

'They should be taken up for breach of promissory attentions,' suggested I, airily. 'We might do it—four plaintiffs at a time. Capital damages we might get.'

'Max's poor wife,' sighed Dorothy, with very generous, but certainly inexplicable, compassion, 'will have a good deal to put up with; he is so uncertain in his mind.'

'I don't think him uninformed,' criticised Patience, presently, looking as if she had thoroughly understood Dorothy's term (which I must own I did not), 'and he can be tolerably agreeable when he likes; but he is idle, and unfortunately plain.'

'If Minnie Frere, whoever she is, knew him as well as we know him, she would evidently have refused him—as we intended to do.'

I said this, thinking it just as well to put it forcibly at once; and rather struck by the coincidence that the points we were condemning in Max were the very points we had particularly admired in him a few days ago. The thought at any other time would have made me laugh—not so now! O, not so now!

'Joan,' said I, as we rose from table (for after all the temptation proved irresistible), 'you are off to the garden, I suppose, as usual. It will look very nice after a few more mornings' hard work. If you hadn't said you wished to do it all yourself, because you enjoyed it so much, I would offer to help you.'

And, would you believe it? Joan was so weak that she went: she would not venture to stop her wearisome employment suddenly, for fear of our insinuations, and

so she took the leather gloves, and the mushroom, and the implements of torture, and went out to her morning's toil. When I had sufficiently enjoyed the idea and the sight, I fetched her in, knowing she would not have the courage to come of her own accord. Then we formed another conclave about the answer that was to be sent to Max's letter. One thing we unanimously agreed, that it should go by return; because, if we waited, Max (and anyone would have guessed from our representations that he had a strong taint of insanity in his nature) might think all kinds of ridiculous and improbable things. The wonder to me now, in looking back on that discussion, is, that no one of us questioned another as to what was meant by this. We all seemed to understand so well what 'ridiculous and improbable things' he would be most likely to think. Yes, our letter should certainly go by return; but—who was to write it?

'Dorothy, of course,' said Patience, 'she's the eldest; and the news was sent her.'

'The news was sent to us all,' insisted Dorothy, hastily forfeiting the honour. 'Wasn't it put, "*My dear Cousins*,"'

'But it was addressed to you,' asserted Joan, quenching the remark, 'and you ought to answer it.'

'Joan knows him best,' put in Patience, daintily satirizing the same remark made under happier circumstances a week before.

'Patience, you write the best hand,' suggested I, on the same principle, and proud of my impunity.

But it fell to Dorothy after all, as was only natural; and she was obliged to accept the office, little as she coveted it.

'I shall write out a rough copy,'

she said, 'and you must all help me. I don't know what to say, I'm sure.'

'I should begin with "My dear Cousin,"' I proposed, as a brilliant idea; which it was, as far as it went—though Patience said that wasn't very far.

'What else?' inquired Dorothy, looking vacantly through the window over the back of her devonport; while we all supported her on foot.

'Perhaps after that,' mused Patience, with generosity, 'you had better say we are glad to hear of his approaching happiness, and hope—'

'Slowly, please,' entreated Dorothy, piteously, as her hard pen scratched along the paper, 'his approaching happiness, and hope—'

'It won't last long.'

'Be quiet, Barbara,' pleaded Dorothy, 'you put me out.'

'Well, Patience,—or somebody—and hope—'

'His wife will accept our friendship, when—'

'We offer it, which won't be yet.'

'Go on, Dorothy. Don't get into a fidget. Never mind, Barbara. Now, "we are very sorry you could not come over to tell us the news yourself."'

'O, the egregiousness of that fib! It should stand alone. Make a postscript of it.'

'You had better say I remember his wife very well,' said Joan, with self-abnegation, 'and admire her, but regret—'

'He should have chosen her.'

'I suppose you must tell him,' resumed Patience, 'that the valued sympathy and kind and generous good wishes he bespeaks are his, if they are—'

'Anybody's; as they certainly aren't ours.'

'And that we hope soon to make the acquaintance of—'

'Somebody with more sense.'

'The acquaintance of—acquaintance of—of—what are we to call her this time, girls? we won't say wife again, because she isn't his wife yet.'

'Let's say acquaintance of the person who isn't your wife yet, and never may be.'

'O, how you confuse one, Barbara,' moaned Dorothy; 'what is to come after acquaintance of your—?'

'Why not put—*your choice*?' suggested Joan, who always had a turn for romantic terms in letters.

'Wife will do,' remarked Patience, curtly; 'I dare say the word won't come a bit too often to please him now. Go on, and that when we do we—'

'Will tell her what we think of her.'

'Say,' dictated Patience, with an annihilating glance across at me, 'we hope she will come with you to stay a little in our quiet old—what?—home sounds sentimental.'

'Affections *ad libitum* offered her on her arrival. Put that in, Dorothy.'

'Place will do,' decided Dorothy, hastening hopefully on, now that the end seemed near. 'What's the conclusion to be?'

'Be sure put, "We are, my dear cousin, your dear cousins."'

'Don't be stupid, Barbara,' reproved Patience. 'Finish it up like an ordinary letter, Dorothy.'

'But it isn't an ordinary letter,' I maintained, 'and has taken more than ordinary pains to write; and it ought not to have an ordinary ending. Sign all our names in a procession, single file. O, won't he congratulate himself, when he sees them, that he didn't form any unfortunate attachment among them! What an alliance!'

'Dorothy Pendlethorpe,

'Patience Pendlethorpe,
'Barbara Pendlethorpe,
'Joan Pendlethorpe.'

'I should say sign it *D. Pendlethorpe and Co.*,' suggested Joan, with praiseworthy vivacity. 'At any rate it won't sound old-maidish.'

But Dorothy was not to be lured into the straggling paths of originality; and it is impossible to conceive anything more ordinary than the conclusion she selected from the recesses of her own brain.

'Now, Dorothy, read it over to us,' was the unanimous invitation, 'and make haste. Why should we spend the whole morning over it?'

But Dorothy only pored the closer over her scrawling words, and muttered faintly that there was a mistake somewhere. As if we hadn't known that all the morning!

'It's no wonder that I've been blundering,' fretted our poor eldest; 'you were all bent on confusing me. I can see how it has occurred.'

'Don't stop to correct,' cried I, capturing it before she had begun: 'if we don't hear it as it is, how are we to propose amendments? I'll read it out. Here goes.'

"My dear cousin." That's my bit, and very telling, I think.'

'What does it tell?' inquired Patience, with a chill.

'It speaks in hieroglyphics. Now don't interrupt again, it doesn't do justice to Dorothy's composition. "My dear cousin, we are glad to hear of his approaching——"'

"Of *your* approaching," corrected Patience, recognising her own idea.

"Happiness, and hope it won't last."—There's a sort of dash there, as if an error had been detected and nipped in the bud.—"And hope his wife will accept our friendship

when we offer it, which won't be yet. We were very sorry you could not come over and tell us your news yourself. O, the e-gre!" —another dash there. "Joan says she remembers your wife very well, and admires her, but regrets he should have chosen her—" dash again. "The valued sympathy and kind and generous good wishes you bespeak are yours if they are anybody's, as they aren't ours, and that we hope soon to make the acquaintance of somebody with more——. We can't say your wife again, because she is not. Of your choice wife. And that when we do we will tell her. And we hope she will come with you soon to stay in our quiet old affections." That's all. You certainly had no right to call *this* an ordinary letter, Patience. Cheer up, Dorothy, there is material here for a fine composition. Try again, and we won't bother.'

The plan succeeded better than could have been expected, for Dorothy didn't leave her place at the devonport again until the letter was written. She pretended not to want to read this second effort aloud to us, but looked suspiciously pleased when we declined to take any refusal, and she read it with a self-appreciation that was deliciously unctuous. Really, it read very well, too. Yet, to watch it folded and sealed seemed a bit dismal too, and I'm sure I had detected a wrinkle on Dorothy's forehead while she had been reading it which had never been there before.

But now that it was composed and indited, what was to be done with it? This was a question of moment—of a good many moments.

'If we give the letter to one of the servants to post, *everybody* will be talking,' said Patience, impressively.

'Everybody,' I assented, wondering a little though why we had never thought of this with regard to those previous frequent letters—but of course a thought takes a long while to mature if it is a good thought.

'One of us must go,' decided Dorothy; 'you may as well, Joan.'

But Joan did not catch with any eagerness at the proposal—had indeed a strong objection to it.

Well, at last we made the only arrangement which we could amicably make. This was for all of us to go together—for a walk. Briskly we impressed that fact upon each other. Hadn't we always intended to take a walk together this morning, and in that very direction? Under those circumstances what so natural as to take the letter with us, and drop it into the post office as we passed?

'At any rate,' mused Dorothy, with a feeble joy struggling into her face, 'we shall not be called upon to write again to Max very soon.'

'All the better,' put in Patience.

'We should only get unpleasantly commented on if we did,' added Joan, plaintively.

'But in future, you see,' suggested I, as a lively palliative, 'we should be able to address our letters to his wife. *There's* a comfort. Now then, let us start, as we are to go all of us in a crowd.'

'How contemptuously you speak, Barbara,' said Dorothy, in a tone of mild reproach.

'Well, aren't we a crowd?' I asked, 'and, more than that, aren't we a crowd without a solitary prospect left among us?'

'I cannot help wishing we were not quite so many,' mused Joan; 'I wish Max *had* cared for one of us. Three is, after all, quite a usual number; but four—'

'Four is terrific,' struck in Dorothy, with extraordinary energy.

'Four!' I echoed, 'why, I feel to-day as if we were *forty* at least. We shall look forty out in the streets walking two and two. We look forty here all crowded in a room. We always shall look forty of us now—all totally, hopelessly, irretrievably unmarriageable.'

And then it happened. I'm sure I don't know exactly how, or why, or who began it, but it happened. I affirm that the first twinkle was in Dorothy's eye. Joan has told me since that the first was in mine. Dorothy asserts that she saw the first in Patience's. And Patience never can be sure that she didn't catch the first in Joan's.

Perhaps we were all right, too. At any rate the fact stands where it was. The twinkle in somebody's eye brought a twinkle in somebody else's, and in about half a minute we were all in the very middle of a long, hearty irrepressible laugh.

MARK HARDCASTLE.



SPORT AMONGST THE MOUNTAINS.

By 'SARCELLE.'

IT is a gloriously bright, glowing autumn morning, a light breeze ruffles the clear blue surface of the Atlantic, or rather of a little bay thereof, which lies in a pretty setting of hills and mountains just in front of the window where—at I am writing, beyond the hydrangeas and fuchsias of the garden and an intervening stretch of marshland, home of many a snipe and duck. As the day is bright, and the water in the river low, there is but little chance of hooking either salmon or trout before evening; therefore, instead of 'dropping a line' to those finny aristocrats, I will endeavour to 'improve the shining hour' by writing a few lines about them, and their 'followers.'

Truly a fitting room is this in which to write of matters piscatorial—ay, of sport in general. In a corner, just two feet to the left of me, are my two beloved rods, a trout fly-rod and a trolling rod; by the opposite end of the fire-place repose a handsome salmon-rod, and a landing-net of portentous dimensions, so huge that it looks more suitable for Og, king of Bashan, or Goliath of Gath, than for any modern mortal: but it is not upon record that those large gentlemen ever studied the quaint pages of 'The Contemplative Man's Recreation.' Two chairs off me lies my old creel, which had eleven good sea-trout in it yesterday, but now contains only my precious fly-book, its cover shiny with hundreds of glittering scales of the beautiful fish, which I shall be at no pains to remove; for when I am far away from these charming scenes those scales shall remind me of the river and the lough, of the mountains and the

heather, of the grouse and the snipe, and of the genial companions it has been my good luck to meet in old Ireland.

A little beyond my fishing-basket is a sideboard which is littered with central fire cartridges, tins of powder, and bags of shot. It is also adorned by one or two short clay pipes, and by a 'billy-cock' hat, which, like almost every other hat in this inn, is covered with the most approved 'casts' of salmon and trout-flies. In the corner, by the sideboard, two more rods and another landing-net; on the floor, sundry and divers pairs of sturdy-looking shooting boots. Next we come to a big salmon-creel, three central-fire guns, and a muzzle-loader; more hats, adorned with bunches of heather and casts of flies; a big shrimp-net (by the way, I and a fellow-sportsman took about five quarts of beautiful prawns with that latter one afternoon); more pipes, more fishing rods.

In one corner of the room is a stuffed badger, which was pulled out of a deep and narrow hole, after a struggle of nearly two hours, by a white bull terrier with a brown patch over one eye, who is now lying at my feet. On the chimney-piece are a grouse and a peregrine falcon, the latter incurring grave penalties by 'the wearing of the green,' for some friendly hand has adorned it with a little Dolly Varden hat of that colour. Now to complete his notion of my immediate surroundings, the reader must picture another window at the other end of this room, looking out not upon the sea, but upon a high heathery mountain, the home of the grouse and the hare; and he must ima-

gine frequent interruptions from the incursions of friendly dogs, pointers, setters, retrievers, greyhounds, and terriers. Yes, the whole atmosphere of this house is evidently of the sport, sporting; the 'commercial' would be at a discount here; all are lovers of the rod or gun, many of both; and those of the fair sex who honour us with their presence—thank goodness we are not without their refining and humanising influence—take a keen interest in our sport, and are proud of the doings of their respective husbands, brothers, or sons—for there are several family-parties staying here.

Some of my readers with sporting proclivities are already beginning to ask, 'Where is this "happy hunting ground?"' Alas, I fear me that I must not proclaim it in the pages of so popular a periodical as this, for there were nine rods on the little river yesterday, and our worthy hostess has her house nearly full of people, and her hands quite full of work; and if it were only generally known in London how delightful a place is the White Trout Inn (that is the most appropriate *sobriquet* I can think of for the moment), we should be flooded with eager sportsmen, the rivers would be over-fished, the moors over-shot, and the place spoiled. Before I dilate further on the delights of the White Trout Inn and its surroundings, I must lay down my pen for a brief space, and devote myself to the consumption of a hearty breakfast, at which some of the fish, from which the inn takes its name, invariably figure, accompanied generally by eggs and bacon, grilled mutton, and other solid viands.

It is done, the inner man is refreshed; and though a stronger breeze has sprung up, bringing clouds with it, and rods are off to

the river, and guns to the mountain, and a knowing old professional angler in long-tailed frieze coat, indescribable hat, knee breeches, and black stockings, opines that there is a good chance for both trout and salmon, I must forego the sport for the present, and finish my appointed task. The White Trout Inn is not situated in a town, nor even in a village, though there are a few scattered houses here and there, but the place has the inestimable advantage to the sportsman of being twenty miles distant from a railway. Within a comfortable hour's walk of mine inn is a lovely lake five miles in length, surrounded by mountains as grand as artist could desire. White villas nestle here and there on the wooded slopes that lead down to the clear blue water, dotted with sundry fishing-boats, from which anglers are throwing the fly for salmon or trout, both of which swarm in the lake.

From the lake down to the sea a beautiful river runs a picturesque course of about four miles, in a valley with mountains on the one side and well-cultivated hills and slopes on the other; and in every part of the river are to be found the noble salmon, the brilliant white or sea-trout, and their humble relative the brown trout—in England a prize coveted by most anglers, and esteemed by most *gourmands*, but here looked upon with contempt alike by fishermen and epicures, being far exceeded both in strength and gamesomeness, and in delicacy of flavour, by its migratory brother from the sea. The fishing in both river and lake is free to visitors at this inn, who have, moreover, the privilege of shooting over some of the neighbouring mountains, where may be found grouse, hares, woodcock, and snipe. There is

grand duck-shooting here in the season, and the lovely bay affords an immense abundance and variety of sea fish to those who like a good breeze and a bit of heavy hand-pulling, as an occasional change after many days' fly-fishing. We have a glorious sandy beach, where sea-bathing may be enjoyed untrammelled by conventionalities of machines or costumes. We have always some of 'the best of all good company' here; in fact, one gentleman, as true a sportsman as ever crossed country, drew trigger, or threw salmon-fly, has taken up his abode here *en permanence*, and finds sport of some kind for nearly every day in the year.

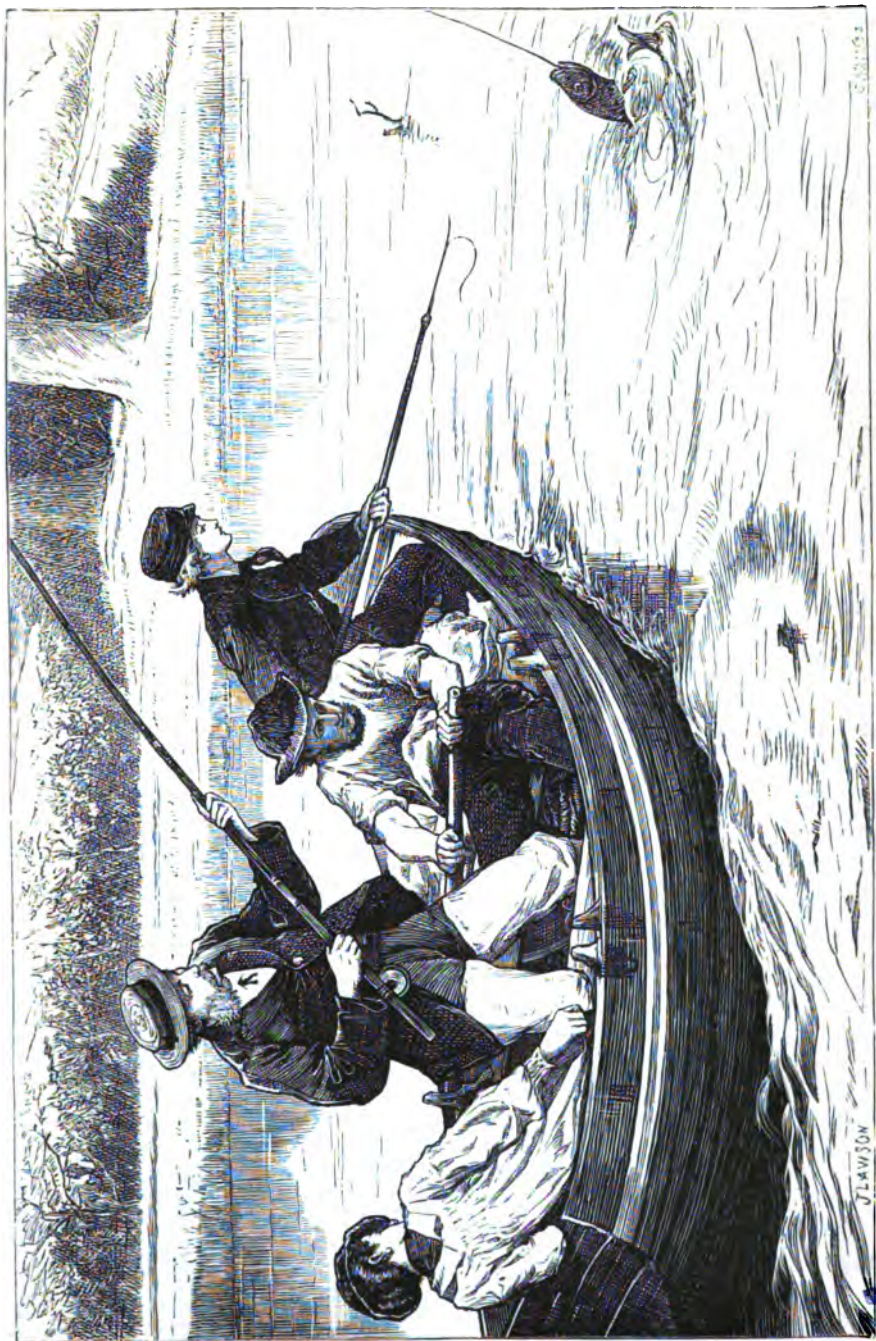
I must not omit to mention that, for those who like to take rifle or shot-gun out to sea with them, we have seals pretty frequently, and a great abundance of large wild-fowl. Our larder, I need hardly say, is kept constantly supplied with the best of fish and game, and the 'cellar's as good as the cook,' the whisky especially being undeniable and insinuating, and 'devil a headache in a hogshead of it.'

But I am to say something about salmon-fishing. Faith, it's difficult to say anything new about it, inspiring and exciting theme though it be. The *rationale* of it I utterly renounce. We know pretty well why a trout takes an artificial fly. It is a tolerably correct imitation of a natural insect, which is the natural food of our spotted friend; and the different flies which are used on different waters, and during the various months, are constantly changed to correspond with the proper insects frequenting each locality at each period. Of course, this is reasonable enough. A trout is lying on the look-out for flies, and something comes floating down the stream towards

him, which so closely resembles his natural food, that he sees no earthly (or watery) reason to suppose it to be unwholesome, and he takes it, and—it disagrees with him. But why on earth a salmon should ever make such a fool of himself as to jump at a huge, gaudy arrangement of feathers, fur, silk, &c., which is not an imitation of anything 'in the heavens above or the earth below, or the waters under the earth,' the nearest approach to a faithful simile for which would seem to be an imaginary cross between a humming-bird and a butterfly, altogether passes my comprehension. Still more astonishing is it that these extraordinary objects must be varied in size, colours, and sundry other particulars, according to locality and time of year.

But let not the reader, who is yet unlearned in the craft, imagine that *every* salmon is such a fool as to leap at the gaudy lure. From my little experience of the number of these princely fish which run up certain rivers, and the small proportion of them which fall victims to the rod, I would rather be inclined to come to the conclusion that these unhappy individuals must either be lunatics or morbid misanthropical (misopiscical?) specimens of the genus, that a fish who takes the fly is either entirely bereft of his senses or has firmly made up his mind, wearied with subaqueous trials, to hang himself—upon a hook—and that his vigorous struggles after he is hooked are to be accounted for by that instinct of self-preservation which is the first law of nature, and which often leads a would-be suicide, after he has jumped into the water, to exert himself might and main to get out of it again.

Not the least charm of salmon-fishing is the wild grandeur of



"SALMON FISHING."

Drawn by J. Lawson.]

the scenery in which the best of it is found, heather-clad mountains, ravines, and gorges, rapid, rushing streams, plashing waterfalls, deep smooth pools, and huge rocks here and there in the river, adding picturesqueness to the scene and increased danger to the line.

Who has not read vivid descriptions of the killing of a salmon?

First comes the 'rise,' no little circling splash like that of a trout, but a rushing boil in the water, hailed with a joyous shout by the angler and his attendant; then there is a momentary check; then the merry music of the clicking reel as the fish rushes off, perchance quite slowly at first, not apparently quite alive to the danger of his position; but when the fact dawns upon him that the little sting in the tail of the fly he snapped at is attached to something that is seriously menacing his liberty, his struggles become exciting in the extreme. Now comes a swift rush, taking out some fifty yards of line without a check. Now he is seen for a moment—of extreme danger to the tackle—throwing himself high out of water, a huge bar of brightest silver, falling back into it again with a splash. Instantaneous guesses are made at his weight; then comes a long run, fatiguing for both fish and fisherman, up and down stream; then the salmon, getting rather fagged, half turns on his side near the opposite bank, but he is of no use over there. A little later on he comes over to our side, and Sandy or Patsy, as the case may be, 'makes an offer' at him with the gaff, but it is too soon; the fish, roused to fresh life by the sight of the horrid biped, exerts all his remaining strength—we have two or three last frantic rushes, moments of intense excitement, during which we have not

one single thought for anything in the wide world but that salmon and that gaff. At last the gallant fellow is near the bank, thoroughly tired this time—the gaff is in his quivering flesh; Patsy struggles up the bank with our glittering prize; the fish is knocked on the head, the fly carefully cut out, the hackles blown and cleared of blood or dirt—for some salmon-flies are worth from fifteen shillings to two pounds each—and then we and Patsy, or Sandy, can sit down on the bank and enjoy our well-earned rest.

First we must have a 'tot' of whisky to 'wet that fish;' then Patsy says, 'Sure now, yer honour 'll be afther giving the blessed pool a bit of rest, an' we'll thry another directly.'

So we sit and enjoy the beauty of the mountain and river scenery, with a pipe of good tobacco and a frequent furtive glance at the salmon, till a freshening breeze, or the sight of a rising fish, inspires us with fresh courage, to result, if we are lucky, in a fresh capture.

Pleasant, too, is the fishing from a boat on the rippling surface of our fair gem of a lake in the grand setting of those majestic mountains; ay, and pleasant too when the salmon are sulky, is the fishing for the beautiful white trout in the various streams between the lake and the tideway; and exciting indeed is the struggle when a white trout with glittering scales, only a few hours from the sea, is hooked on a small trout-fly and fine drawn gut—for your sea-trout is the most active of fish, and will give the angler a braver fight than a brown trout of more than double his size, flinging himself constantly high into the air, a silvery flash of light, game to the very last, making rush after rush, and spring

after spring, when you think he should be quite safe for the landing-net.

Aye, and when the shades of evening are falling over mountain and valley, river, lake, and bay, when the smoke from the chimney of our inn, rising from amongst the trees which surround it, suggests busy doings at the huge peat-fire in the kitchen, pleasant is the walk or drive back to that snug hostelry, and jovial the dinner—with salmon and trout fresh from lake and river, grouse not quite so fresh from the mountain, and snipe from the marsh.

Genial and jolly, too, is the evening talk over our glasses of punch, the recital of incidents of sport during the day, the comparison of flies, the arrangement of plans for the morrow. 'Early to bed and early to rise,' is a very good motto generally for the sportsman; but there are seasons when the morning fishing is of but little account, and, mindful of this, we prolong our *symposia* and our yarns far into the small hours till our stock of anecdotes and tobacco are alike exhausted.

Many a rich man has paid down his hundreds for the rental of part of a salmon river, and perhaps his fish have cost him twenty to a hundred guineas each. But then again the poor professional anglers often make a good living by it, partly by the salmon they catch, and partly by acting as guides and instructors to tourists and amateurs. And here let me tell the reader to take the anecdotes of his tourist friends anent the salmon they have killed in Ireland or Scotland *cum grano salis*. I believe that about nineteen out of twenty fish 'taken' by non-resident amateurs are risen and hooked by Patsy or Sandy aforesaid.

The most delicate part of the

negociation having thus been effected, the rod is carefully handed to the amateur, and he is instructed how to humour and play the fish, which is gaffed at last, and he may certainly be said to have killed it, though he was not exactly the man who caught it.

But to do Patsy or Sandy justice he is—though sometimes, *sub rosa*, a bit of a poacher—a keen lover of real sport, and infinitely prefers accompanying any one who can throw a fly and kill a fish himself to one of the amateurs aforesaid, in spite of the heavier fee he may expect from the latter.

A friend called one day on a professional fisherman near here, and found him lugging a big table about his cabin by the aid of a hook and a bit of a line. 'What the devil are ye doin' at all at all?' asked his friend Corny. 'Sure, thin, I'd betther be brakin' the hook in the table than brakin' it in a salmon,' was the reply.

And this little yarn bears a very good practical moral. See that your tackle is sound and perfect in every respect before you go after salmon.

Ludicrous incidents sometimes happen in salmon-fishing. A bungling amateur on the Bandon river, near Cork, hooked something which seemed to him to be an immense and very sulky salmon. The stream was swift, but the fish never travelled very far, moving sluggishly about and resisting all his efforts to bring it to the surface.

At last, after a long but very uneventful play of about two hours, the thing came into a more rapid part of the stream, lifted to the top of the water, and behold, a big ox-hide, which had been sunk in that part of the river! The disgust of that angler, and the profane language he gave way to, may be imagined. A friend of

mine had a long play with what seemed to be a very heavy spring fish, but at last it came to the top, when the attendant Patsy exclaimed, 'Bedad, it's a judy, sir!' And a 'judy' it was, that is, a spent fish or kelt, but it was hooked by the tail, which accounts for the vigorous play it gave.

There is a rather strong religious sentiment among some of our Irish professional salmon-fishers. One of them has been known at the commencement of a season to sprinkle his patron's rod, line, and flies, with holy water, as a potent charm. Another worthy was out the other day with a friend of mine fishing for white trout. My friend hooked a nice strong fish

over two pounds, which got away after a brief play. In the first excitement of this loss his attendant exclaimed, 'Oh, the devil carry him then!' but, suddenly bethinking himself, added, 'an' may God forgive me for cursin' the blessed fish—that didn't take a good hould!'

But the day has become so beautifully breezy and cloudy that I can't possibly sit here any longer, knowing that all my brethren of the craft are on the river or the lake, so I will e'en pick up rod, shoulder basket, and be off after them. Kind reader, I crave your indulgence, and—
Au revoir.

A SONNET.

COME, Joy, I said, thy sunbeams fling
Around my path; and while I sing,
Let sweetest flowers around me blow,
And zephyrs whisper where they grow.

Come Love, I cried, and fill this heart,
'Tis sadness all, but where thou art;
The yellow sunbeams fade and die,
The breezes pass me with a sigh.

Ah! woe for me! Joy came, Love came;
With arrows keen, and torch of flame.
Nor knew I then that by their side
Sorrow's pale form was wont to glide.

Come peace of mind. I weep in vain—
My tears but answer me again.
With Joy and Love my peace has flown,
And left me here with grief alone.

L. O. J.

A BACHELOR'S HINT TO SOCIETY.

MARRIED, sir!—not I. I value my liberty too much for that. Don't snigger, young man: I don't mean that license-and-latch-key liberty which is the height of a young fool's ambition. The liberty I meant, and (thank goodness!) have, is of a negative kind, and consists simply in the absence of constraint. I could never stand what I will call the resigned jog-trotism—the good-natured monotony, of married life.

I don't say that the wives are to blame, for I honestly don't think so. Nor are the husbands in every case. Human nature, sir, is the arch-disturber of domestic felicity as prescribed by Society; or, to take it the other way, Society is the obstinate opponent of the human temperament as fashioned by Nature:—too deep for you, I suppose? Well then, I will indulge you with plain language.

A man—in the ordinary sense of the term—has certain qualities, or attributes, about him. Sometimes he has so few, and those so imperfectly defined, that we can only picture him as consisting of these three letters—M, A, N. But every man possesses at least one attribute; and, luckily for him, Society draws it out, and magnifies it, until it goes a great way. Take three examples. No. 1 is an utter ass: his attribute is a balance at his banker's. No. 2, is a genteel pauper: his attribute is playing divinely on the fiddle. No. 3 has no money, and never touched a fiddle: his attribute (as becomes such double incompetence) is an eternal good-nature.

Now, in the case of No. 1, Society says—he is a fool; but he has money: let him marry. He does so. Lay him aside for a moment.

As to No. 2, Society says—he is a pauper; but a fiddle, properly treated, becomes a capital: let him marry. He does so. Place him by No. 1.

About No. 3, Society hesitates a moment—he is poor, he has no genius; he is only good-natured. What can we do with him?—Ah, a lucky thought!—marry him to an heiress. That will do. And so, *he's* settled.

Now, you know, they are all married, by Society, who presides in person over the ceremonies. Let us see what happens to each.

No. 1, being a fool, Mrs. 1 can feel no pleasure in his society. If she is as bad as he, she despises him as a creaky cane on which she cannot lean. If she is a clever woman, with plenty of *esprit*, her glory grows monotonous, and there is no credit or excitement in bending so supple a reed to her will. But No. 1 has money, and Mrs. 1 must seek her consolation in that. She dresses, gives parties, rides, drives, flirts, and concocts daily excuses for her husband's imbecility. If she is a good woman, this is all—if she is not, look around you for the sequel.

Now let us take the fiddle. A man who can make this instrument speak sweetly must have goodness somewhere about him. A clever musician has a respectable background, whatever else may be painted upon it. Now if Mrs. 2 does not object to the fiddle, she may be tolerably comfortable so far as her husband is concerned. But before that article can generate prosperity, think of the cares and troubles of their life! 'Cares and troubles' is a hacknied phrase; but hacknied phrases generally contain the truth. How can that

man's genius, his poetic imagination (which all musicians have), his better nature—grow, thrive, and illumine a home, cheer a wife, and feed a baby, cramped, pinched, and tortured by want? If it only rested with the fiddle, prosperity, not too long deferred, might lend a timely ray; and all would go well. But it sometimes happens that the fiddle can't wait for prosperity in the bush, and so takes to gin in the hand; after which, my dear sir, need I say more about the home, and the wife, and the baby?

For No. 3, marriage is an asylum, a sort of workhouse, or refuge for the destitute. He knows nothing, and has nothing—except good-nature. Now I don't know how far this may go in a household—the ladies will perhaps tell us. But Mrs. 3 need never be out of temper, so far as her husband is concerned; and, however doubtful such an advantage may seem to her, she is at all events as well off as Mrs. 1, or Mrs. 2. No. 3 is not an absolute idiot; and *she* has money—really, they ought to be very comfortable! says Society.

And so, doubtless, they are, according to their own conventional ideas. But what an everyday, humdrum sort of existence it is—isn't it? Do you suppose, young man, that a marriage for money (on the one side), and for marriage, simply (on the other), can ever result in real happiness? Bah! I don't say that I should not like the wife I sometimes picture to myself; but I tell you that I would rather be single all my life than plunge my hand into Society's cap and draw out the dubious ticket which turns up a prize or a prolonged misfortune, as the case may be.

Now, what do I want to prove by these three examples, taken at hazard, without order or design? I want to prove nothing; but

simply to put it as a question: *is not the whole system of marriage, as arranged and prescribed by Society, bad?*

Don't get angry, young man: you and your Angelina don't come under any of my three heads. But I am convinced of this—that until plotting mammas, pompous papas, indolent young ladies, silly effeminate young men, outrageous fashions, ruinous feeding, and the bumps of envy and emulation—are all done away with, or greatly modified, there will never be real happiness in marriage.

Let us take one more example. A young man meets a girl at a ball. He is good-looking, clever, and agreeable. She is all that, and much more. They fall in love. Why, in the name of common sense, shouldn't they marry? Ask Society. Society frowns, shakes her head, and, with a preliminary *ahem!* says as follows: 'This young man is all you describe him; I know him well, and he is rather a favourite of mine; but that must content him, for, between you and me, he has only a wretched two hundred pounds a-year.'

'Not wretched, if you please—I begin, somehow feeling the remark to be personal.

'Yes, wretched,' says Society, grimly, 'for *she* has as much!'

'Well then,' I cry, joyously, 'their little fortunes amount to four hundred pounds together, which is enough to begin——'

'Begin!' echoes Society, contemptuously, 'there must be no *beginning* for me. I cannot be expected to visit beginners in life, nor can I throw away my dinners on any such barren soil. Besides, if you look at these little commercial tables, which I carry constantly about me, you will see that we have a regular matrimonial tariff, as it were—a sort of interest

table; which, like the rule of three, says: As the young gentleman's income is to the young lady's income, so is the young lady's income to *very much more*: by which you can tell at once what amount of young gentleman a given quantity of young lady is worth.' And Society shows me the tables, which look dreadfully business-like, and are bound in parchment, secured with red tape.

I shut up the book in a hurry; for in it I catch sight of my own worth to Society—which rather frightens me.

But nevertheless I begin to think the matter over, and can only come to one conclusion—decidedly against Society and her little parchment-bound tables. And I say to myself, 'Would not these two young people be content to rough it a little, at first, in each other's company? Would it not rather be an honest, invigorating stimulus to his daily efforts to know that *she*, whom he loves, is at home to cheer his leisure, and reward his toil with her grateful smiles? And would it not be her pride and pleasure to have a little healthful tussle with the world, on her own account, for *his* good and happiness? And would *she* so very much object to begin half-way up the ladder, with a faithful companion to assist her every step?'

Is Society the best nurse, governess, tutor, and universal preceptor we can get?—and are her precepts always fraught with infallibility?

Now, what does she do with these two young people? First, she whispers to the youth, 'Marry—you are not respectable unless you do.' And into the shrinking ear of the girl she hisses, 'Old maid!—old maid!' The youth and the girl try to do what Society enjoins: they meet—they love!

But just consider what obstacles

beset them on all sides. As soon as Maria is marriageable, the family mansion becomes a fortress, with frowning walls, and a deep moat of conventionality in front. Poor Theodore beholds his love marshalled through its gloomy portals, sees the drawbridge pulled up, and hears the cruel gates bang. The only thing he can do, is to get an introduction to papa; in seeking for which he feels like a violent Tory asking a rampant Radical for a Government appointment. When this difficulty has been overcome, what takes place? He pays a visit of the length prescribed by Society, during which he fidgets under the inquiring glance of papa, and the freezing hauteur of mamma, while poor little Maria timidly contemplates her lover for the first time by daylight.

I need not enumerate the long string of obstacles, harassings, and annoyances through which Theodore must pass before he can get a quiet word with Maria: they are well-understood and appreciated by all. He proposes at last; and is forthwith badgered and cross-examined about his income, his prospects, his brothers and sisters, and uncles and aunts, and the terms of his great-grandfather's will. And so on.

From the day on which Maria says 'Yes,' everybody about her says 'No,' out of sheer conventionality, probably meaning 'Yes' just as much as she does, poor little thing! And then, Society has a great deal to say, about this time. She smiles a provoking smile, and says, 'Softly—not so fast: Mr. Paterfamilias, just allow me to present to your notice this little parchment-bound book, containing, &c., used in the very best families, &c., &c.' And so they plan, arrange, conspire, and plot; for all the world as if they didn't by any means want Maria to be

married — instead of wishing it above all things.

As if nurse Society were not bad enough, too, they gravely tell Maria what a *sacrifice* she is making, and enjoin a calm and collected dignity, for the honour of the family; and then they show her the commercial tables, which Society kindly lends for the purpose, and which astonish her very much indeed; and in the end, contrive to imbue her with a great deal of folly, false pride, and conventionality.

Now why should there be all this nonsense about it? I am by no means an advocate for so-called 'ineligible' matches; but why should not Society lower its standard of eligibility a degree or two? By what right should a youth of twenty-one, and a girl of nineteen, desire to begin life from the point at which their parents are about to leave it off? It is in the insane struggle for this principle, that money matches are arranged, between unprepossessing heiresses and impecunious imbeciles; or between wealthy old beaux and fair young portionless girls. Money can buy much, but it can never buy true love and devotion.

It is because young men are so timid of their own resources, and so loth to invade the sullen fortress which surrounds their loves with its iron wall of papa, Society, and the commercial tables—that the word '*fast*' occupies so prominent a place in our vocabulary. A young man who sees no possibility of marrying within a reasonable period, gets careless, heartless, and vicious. He flees Society, with its

ominous inquiry after his 'intentions;' and, in an evil hour of despair or wine, resolves in his heart never to have any. The girl he would have married under a different state of things, mopes and pines, and—more faithful than he—refuses other more eligible offers; living in hope, until she finds herself too mature for anything save Woman's Rights!

If you look around, my dear sir, you will find that what I say is true in the main. Society would do well to consider this marriage question. By lowering her standard of eligibility; by inculcating purer and more youthful principles among her girls and boys; by moderating her opinion as to what is *necessary* to new-born households—she would benefit her whole system at once, and deal many a fatal blow in other quarters where hitherto she has only applied specific cures, and patent medicines—as demonstrably absurd as they are obviously ineffectual.

So, you see, my dear sir, that I cannot marry until Society takes this important matter in hand. If I were to fall in love, I might find myself under one of my three heads—which, is not for you to speculate upon.

So I stand by, and wait patiently; and meanwhile, I am free, and live in solitary solvency between my lodgings and the Club. I don't advise *you* to do the same; but at any rate you will do no harm to consider these few random remarks, and then, decide for yourself—am I not a *little bit* right?

J. G. M.

SKETCHES in the EAST

George Cruikshank R.S.A.



THE TALK OF THE TOWN.

MAY I ask whether anybody is ever going to do anything about English hotels? Is there no agitator among tourists and holiday-makers, who, with the single-minded devotion of some trades-union hero, will start a society of Amalgamated Travellers, in order to secure comfort, good dinners, real wine, and punctual service at the several hotels we Journeymen find it our luck to visit in the autumn of the year? Will some learned society, say the Archæological or Antiquarian Society, or possibly the Royal Institution, appoint a committee to inquire into the Bill of Fare invariably presented at the British hotel, with a view to ascertaining why nothing can ever be obtained for dinner, except a steak, a chop, or a chicken? Do not let the hungry voyager be misled by a bill of fare headed *carte du jour*, or imagine that under the French nomenclature he will be served with any dish that is not strictly and painfully confined to the three articles of consumption I have already detailed. Let him not imagine that the *carte des vins* is anything but the truly insular wine-list, or that the cellar is not regularly stocked, and as regularly drank out every season. With reference to this last remark, I cannot refrain from repeating what a well-known London wine-merchant told me not many years ago:—A large and pretentious hotel had been built by an enterprising Limited Company; this wine-merchant had been invited to supply the cellar, and he accordingly entered into negotiations. It was not long before he discovered that he was expected to frame a wine-list, by which the management of the hotel might

net *seventy-five per cent.* clear profit. Having some regard for his own reputation, he declined the contract. But does not this little anecdote go far to explain bad champagne, at twelve shillings per bottle, and worse Margaux at fifteen? Does it not throw some light upon the charge of five shillings for a bottle of *vin ordinaire*, which would be dear at eightpence? In this matter of wine the sojourner at an English hotel—there are a few, a very few, exceptions, I joyfully admit—has great reason to complain; and it is worth the consideration of the large body of tourists who annually flood the watering-places and picturesque scenery of the British Isles, whether they should not next season imitate, to a certain extent, the example of the sons of Rechab, and vow to drink no wine while out for their pleasuring, till the hotel tariffs are appreciably reformed? This is an age of strikes, and possibly a strike of tourists might be organized. Mr. Cook's office might afford a rendezvous where details might be discussed; though, perhaps, the fact might disturb this large-minded public benefactor in making arrangements with the inevitable landlords who are to honour his coupons. The railway companies, however, would not have any objection to allowing a mass-meeting of tourist ticket-holders on their premises. The hall at Euston Square suggests itself at once. At the end of June the prospective holiday-makers might assemble, and elect, as chairman, some individual with a large family, who was in the annual habit of visiting the north of Devon, the coast of Wales,

Scarborough, or the Lakes, and who was in a position, as a representative man, to recount his experiences, and had been sufficiently careful to preserve his hotel bills. Speaker after speaker would rise to endorse the truth of his complaints. Then the following resolutions might be put and carried :—

‘That this meeting is of opinion, that the price-lists of wines, as imposed upon travellers by landlords and managers of hotels, are grossly exorbitant, and ought to be reformed.’

‘That this meeting is further of opinion, that the wines, as described upon the said price-lists, are not what they are pretended to be, but in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred are unquestionably cooked.’

‘That this meeting protests against the gross imposition of corkage being charged against such travellers as choose, out of regard to their health and personal comfort, to bring their own wine with them.’

‘That this meeting protests against the exorbitant charge of sixpence for a bottle of soda-water; the contents being actually worth, at the outside, one half-penny.’

‘That this meeting takes a pledge to drink nothing in the shape of alcoholic liquor, except draught pale ale, and whisky and water.’

‘That this meeting condemns all “dinner” sherry as served at hotels, as very nasty and deleterious to the system.’

‘That this meeting respectfully requests Sir Wilfrid Lawson to bring the whole matter before Parliament at the earliest opportunity.’

A national protest, moreover, ought to be raised against that fearful gastronomic orgie, which

has lately sprung up in large hotels under the name of *table d’hôte*. Almost everybody now-a-days knows pretty well what a real *table d’hôte* is; and we all know that the English imitation is about as bad as it can be; indeed, it is not an imitation, but a horrible caricature. In the first place, some of the diners are positively expected to help the soup and fish, and to carve the bleeding joints. A more ghastly stopper to a healthy appetite can hardly be conceived. The *table d’hôte* is, in fact, nothing more or less than the inevitable soup, fish, and joint, eked out by flabby vegetables, tough entrées, and heavy pastry. The guests are not expected to dine, but only to feed. The waiters, too, are invariably clumsy and noisy; they clatter the plates about behind one’s back in a fashion calculated to send a nervous person into a fit; and they thrust a reeking dish under one’s nose, whether one likes it or not, and are impenetrably deaf to all demands for what one really does want. But we are out for our holidays, irresistibly determined to enjoy ourselves, and we submit meekly to our fate. Two or three of us, who have been irritated beyond all endurance, will probably write to the ‘Times;’ but this is pre-eminently the silly season, and we shall command little sympathy, and certainly obtain no redress. Next year, forgetful of all our grievances and discomforts, we shall start again for our autumn holiday, and probably be as sadly joyful as we were on the last occasion.

The fact is, I fear, that the vast majority of people who go out for a holiday, and tread the tourists’ paths, are not very particular as to the quality of the wine they drink, nor do they worry themselves much about the style of

culinary art with which the victuals set before them are prepared. This is all very well for them and for the innkeepers, but surely the rights of the minority ought to be respected in some degree. If the quality of the wine be ordinary, we surely may expect the price to be tolerably reasonable; and surely a little discipline in the kitchen, and among the waiters, might ensure our soup, fish, and meat being hot and well cooked, even though they be prepared for table in the plainest manner. Some of us object to being treated as beasts in the Zoological Gardens at feeding time. Even if the origin of man be all that Mr. Darwin describes, nothing can take from him the proud privilege of being a cooking animal; and if he cooks at all, there is no reason why he should not cook well. One other complaint I have to bring against the British *table d'hôte*. Why is it invariably fixed for six o'clock? This is usually the most delicious hour of the day in July and August, when every holiday-maker ought to be out of doors. Surely six o'clock is not so peculiarly sacred to the prandial gods, that it is consecrated evermore for the sacrifice of digestion. Continental habits may be advantageously followed in this respect.

Is it not worth while considering whether we English would not be all the better if we took to being a little earlier in the morning? Would not City men, and City clerks, feel all the better if they got to their work—in the summer months at all events—at such an hour that they might clear everything off, and have done with it by three in the afternoon? Are we not rather too fond of turning night into day, and taking our relaxation, such as it is, under gas-light, and amid hot and crowded rooms, when we ought to

have taken it out of doors before sun-set, and been in bed and fast asleep by half-past ten? There is unquestionable truth in the saying, that sleep before midnight is golden; and possibly another generation will insist upon this truth, and reform our social habits accordingly. It is a commonplace remark that we live now-a-days at railroad pace, and that children become men before they are boys, and it is to be hoped that economists of brain, flesh, and blood, will soon, in no uncertain voice, warn the keen runners in the race for wealth, that all the glories of the goal can never compensate for ruined health and the consequent degeneration of the species. There is something almost appalling in the eager competition that visibly pervades all classes of society. The end of all this restless toil—it is more than honest industry—is simply to gain the power of luxurious living. But we may well pause and ask whether the luxury, when attained, is, after all, worth such terrible anxiety, so many direfully agitated years? Are not a quiet competence, and peaceful mind, better than the worn constitution and wearied brain that find a fitful repose among the gilding and velvet of premature decay? No, says the world, emphatically—nobody ever yet was satisfied with a competence—in fact, nobody ever yet has ventured to determine wherein a competence consists. Soon we go—hurry-scurry—hurly-burly—up and down the streets of Vanity Fair; resolute to outstrip our neighbours; zealous in our devotion to the golden calf; the weakest to the wall—and the devil take the hindmost. Possibly, however, the devil may decline to be dictated to, and take his choice among those at the other end.

At the commencement of the silly season the 'Times' devoted a leading article to some reflections on the enormous rise in recent years in the scale of living, the upshot of these reflections being that, as our grandfathers contrived to lead sufficiently happy lives on a mere fraction of an income which is considered insufficient in these days, we should do well to return to the simpler tastes and habits of two generations ago. Alas! the descent into Avernus is easy enough, but it is weary work retracing our steps. Luxury is the order of the day, and it is almost insisted upon as a necessity of life by the highest and the lowest in their several degrees. Nor is this to be entirely accounted for by increased sensuality of disposition—though it is to be feared that this is no small factor in the account—but it is not unlikely that increased mental activity, and the re-action consequent upon keen competition and anxious strain on all the faculties, compels the toilers to seek for compensation for their fatigues by surrounding themselves with everything that may tend to comfort and solace the body, and to find in social excitement an unnatural resting-place after the labours of the counting-house and office. Thus it is that the London dinner-table far outstrips the Parisian banquet, and that there are few restaurants in the French capital that can hope to rival in cellar or cuisine our first-rate West-end clubs.

Paterfamilias is loudly complaining of the price of meat and coal, and he grumbles at what he considers the abominable unreasonableness of the mechanics, labourers, colliers, &c., who *will* strike for higher pay and less work, forgetting all the time that he and his sons and daughters are setting the example, and that

their wasteful extravagance naturally suggests to those whose misfortune it is to have been born far down in the social scale, that as there is apparently so very much and to spare in the pockets of those for whom they work, there must be something wrong in our social economy; and that they, the hard-handed mechanics and grim diggers for coal and metals, have some right to share in the wealth that they assist to make, and to be placed in a position where they may reasonably hope that the most industrious and careful among them may eventually possess a few of those tens of thousands which appear to be scattered so freely in a higher sphere. Some persons there are who live in a fool's paradise, who positively regard strikes as wicked! Individuals still exist who believe that the labourer and mechanic *ought* to remain labourer and mechanic all their lives, and that an honest endeavour to get more money for their work whenever they can, is little short of blasphemous, as it shows discontent with that state of life in which Providence has seen fit to place them! Such persons can only be placed side by side with those others who consider compulsory education as utterly unnecessary and absolutely mischievous. So when the Talk of the Town grows serious, let it consider worthy of remark, that the last season, which we are assured has been the most brilliant and costly ever known, has not passed away without ominous upheavings among the lower strata of society, which mean something more than advanced prices in butcher's meat and fuel.

It is to be regretted that 'Baron Grimboosh, Doctor of Philosophy, and some time Governor of Baratania,' did not deal with the in-

creased scale of living, which he can scarcely have been blind to among his people, and which might have been made the subject of one of his comprehensive schemes of reformation. He might have taken in hand the extravagant young nobles of Barataria, and made the squandering of a fine estate on the turf, or at the gambling table, a highly penal act on the part of the reckless proprietor; he might, too, have suggested some better way of ushering our gilded youth into the world than through the portals of universities, whose professors teach the philosophy of idleness, and whose tutors have a vast capacity of diffusing learning least calculated to be useful in after life; he might have rebuked and chastised the precocious young gentlemen and ladies who think that, without any toil or trouble, they ought to begin where their fathers left off, and that young married life is impossible without a carriage, a butler, and a French cook; he might, too, have dealt out a Spartan justice to the theorists and philanthropists who *will* write in the newspapers and magazines, and propound with shallow plausibility schemes for the amelioration of mankind, which can only succeed in breeding discontent and covetousness in the breasts of the unthinking and the thriftless, and who appear to take an infatuated delight in removing old landmarks and in running a-muck generally against notions of order, morality, and religion, which better men than themselves have long been content to venerate and abide by. Possibly in some future edition of his work, 'Baron Grimboosh' will publish appendices, with the details of further schemes which this excellent person must have had in his head, and which would even-

tually have worked wonders had he not been too good for the ungrateful people who would not be made moral or sober by act of Parliament.

As a satire this book is by no means equal to 'Erewhon,' referred to last month, nor is it likely to occupy much of the Talk of the Town, though some of the baron's addresses to noisy deputations are very forcible and good for these times. But the caricatures are not well drawn, and though we may dimly recognise Lord Palmerston under the guise of 'Pamfoozle,' it is difficult to believe that 'Bamboozle' is intended for the late Lord Derby, or 'Benoni' for Mr. Disraeli. It is much to be feared that the success of books, like the 'Coming Race,' and 'Erewhon,' is stirring up a host of imitators, and that we are about to be flooded with a vast amount of silly stuff which will be made to pass for rasping satire.

It does not require any words of recommendation from me to assure the readers of 'London Society' that Mr. Planché's 'Recollections and Reflections' will be found extremely entertaining and interesting. These volumes have already received ample and favourable notice from the press generally, and it would be superfluous on my part to add anything to what has already been said. Mr. Planché's 'Recollections' will be eagerly perused by all who are interested in the history of modern drama, and his 'Reflections' will be invariably found to be replete with genuine humour, thorough good nature, and sound common sense. Mr. Planché makes some observations in the first volume on the relative positions of novelist and dramatist, which ought to have some effect upon not a few of our dramatic critics. I have re-

marked that many of these gentlemen are very keen in hunting up the materials upon which they believe the dramatic author to have worked, and they complacently at the outset of their criticisms on a new play refer to the plot of some novel or foreign drama, take it for granted that the author must have had this novel or drama before him, and by a series of implications deny the author's right to call his play 'new and original.' Now I am not at all sure that it is the business of the dramatist to produce a work which, in the strict meaning of the words, is 'new and original.' The art of the dramatist consists, as Mr. Planché truly says, in condensation; he has to prepare for stage representation a story, the action of which may perhaps spread over many years, and which comprises many stirring incidents, but which has to be told to the audience in a very brief space of time, but which must be so contrived that no incongruity is perceptible, nor must any strain be laid upon the imagination of the spectator to fill up the intervals of time that elapse between the acts. The ingenuity of the playwright, moreover, is generally expected so to overcome all difficulties of construction that no change of scene is required during an act, and the dialogue, however elaborated it may be, must always have reference to the action of the drama. Now, to my mind, it is quite enough if the dramatist fulfils these conditions; and so long as the construction and dialogue are his own, I do not consider that it should be imputed to him, as a matter of blame or incompetence, that he has ransacked the brains of other writers for the elements of the story which he clothes with dramatic form. Mr. Tom Taylor, whom Mr. Planché justly styles 'a

master of his art,' has been most severely handled—notably by one 'Q.' in the '*Athenæum*'—for doing the very thing which I have just described, and which some critics appear to regard as an unpardonable crime, but which, after all, only amounts to this, that Mr. Taylor knew his *métier*, and stuck to it; and it might be as well that his critics should follow his example. The gist of the offence, it seems, lies in the fact, that a dramatic author calls a piece 'new and original,' when, in point of fact, he has not drawn upon his imagination for his leading idea, but has borrowed it from foreign sources; this, we are told, is sufficient to place him in the position of a literary felon if he calls his play 'original,' although the treatment of the story, the dialogue, and the situations, are undeniably his own. But it is said, at least he ought publicly to acknowledge the pains to which he is indebted for his main plot. This may not always be such a simple thing to do. A dramatist may read a novel, English, French, or German, and some remarkable incident in the story may at once suggest to him the foundation for a play, and he might be fairly justified in saying that he considered it wholly unnecessary to make an elaborate statement to the public press, showing the various processes of the generation of his play. But an acute critic may have read the novel, too, and may at once trace the train of thought that led to the construction of the drama, and he forthwith assures the public that the play is not what it pretends to be, viz., original, but is simply borrowed, and the author is stigmatized as disingenuous, if not absolutely dishonest. The author at once finds himself placed in a most uncomfortable predicament. He knows

that if he replies to his critic, one portion of the public will consider such reply as undignified on his part; while another and a larger portion will significantly shrug its shoulders, and say, *Qui s'accuse, s'accuse*. But other persons who are not professional critics, but, at the same time, are not wholly incapable of forming a judgment, will be inclined to say, that while the critic had abused his powers, authors would do well to escape the snares that await them, by insisting on the management of the theatre leaving out the word 'original' in the printed bills. The author's reputation could not possibly suffer by such an omission, and the natural hostility of the critic would be partially disarmed.

Mr. Planché tells us that he remembers Letitia Elizabeth Landon ('L. E. L.'), telling him one day that she would give all the reputation she had gained, or was ever likely to gain, by writing books, for one great triumph on the stage. The praise of critics or friends, she added, might be more or less sincere; but the spontaneous thunder of applause of a mixed multitude of utter strangers, uninfluenced by any feelings but those excited at the moment, amounted to, in her opinion, an acknowledgment of gratification surpassing any other description of approbation. If 'L. E. L.' were alive now, and had written a drama, she might easily attain the satisfaction she yearned for. The first representation would, in all probability, be everything she could desire. The curtain would descend upon each act amid tumultuous plaudits, and at the conclusion of the piece, a perfect frenzy of approbation would seem to pervade the enthusiastic and delighted audience. The happy authoress would be

summoned to the footlights, and receive an ovation from the spectators, and zealous pitites would frantically exclaim, 'Give us another drama, Miss Landon.' Alas! 'L. E. L.' would too soon have discovered that the 'spontaneous thunder of applause' was only part and parcel of the stage arrangements, and that the 'acknowledgment of gratification' would be more coldly given upon succeeding nights. Nothing can be more erroneous than to suppose that the success attending a first representation is a sure index to the merits of a play. The audience that crowds the theatre upon such occasions is a special one, and we may say that its verdict is a special one also. And 'L. E. L.' does not appear to have taken into consideration another element which must have its share in exciting the 'thunder of applause,' and that is, the united talents of the actor and the scene-painter. It need scarcely be said, that the author who considers the plaudits of the audience as gained exclusively by his own clever writing must be an extremely conceited person, and his pride may well be humbled when he reflects that the scene-painter, in these days, contributes largely to the success of a play. But it must be conceded that the lot of the dramatic author has now fallen on happy days, or rather nights, for rarely is a piece unhesitatingly and inexorably condemned; and though half-a-dozen critics may be mercilessly severe, six others will be found to eulogize and appreciate. Charles Lamb's 'Club of Damned Authors' has no *raison d'être* now-a-days, nor can we understand the feelings that prompted him to write to the 'Reflector,' under the signature of 'Semel-damnatus,' his letter on 'Hissing at the Theatres.' 'Oh Mr. Re-

flector,' he writes, 'is it not a pity that the sweet, human voice, which was given to man to speak with, to sing with, to whisper tones of love in, to express complaisance, to confer a favour, or to grant a suit—that the musical, expressive human voice should be converted into a rival of the noises of silly geese, and irrational venomous snakes!'

Happy Mr. Tom Taylor, Mr. Byron, Mr. Watts Phillips, Dr. Westland Marston, Mr. Palgrave Simpson, and others, the dramatic authors of the day, that you have never experienced the sensations Charles Lamb goes on to record: 'I never shall forget the sounds on *my night*. I never before that time fully felt the reception which the Author of *All Ill*, in the "*Paradise Lost*," meets with from the critics in the *pit*, at the final close of his "*Tragedy upon the Human Race*," though that, alas! met with too much success:—

"From universal tongues
A dismal universal hiss, the sound
Of public scorn. Dreadful was the din
Of *hissing* through the hall, thick swarming
now
With complicated monsters, head and
tail,
Scorpion and ass, and amphibia dire,
Cerastes horned, Hydraz, and Elops drear,
And Dipsas."

For *hall* substitute *theatre*, and you have the very image of what takes place at what is called the *damnation* of a piece—and properly so called; for here you see its origin plainly, whence the custom was derived, and what the first piece was that so suffered. After this none can doubt the propriety of the appellation.'

It is satisfactory to all true lovers of the drama to know that Mr. Planché warmly advocates the establishment of a national theatre,

'not wholly controlled by the predominant taste of the public.' Those who have ventured to proclaim a like desire have been rudely handled by some portions of the theatrical press; and it has been unjustly said, that the cry for a national theatre which may be, to a considerable extent, independent of its actual receipts, is raised by unsuccessful authors and amateurs who cannot get their crude productions represented on the stage. The fact that experienced veterans, like Mr. Planché and Mr. Tom Taylor, join in the expression of this desire, should be sufficient to silence the interested, if not interesting, writers, who endeavour to overwhelm the advocates of such a theatre with ridicule and vituperation.

Many weary struggles, however, will have to be fought before the obstacles that beset the institution of a national theatre are swept away, or before the notion is even taken up in earnest by thoughtful and determined men; and, for my part, I wish that I could see with Mr. Planché's eyes, and agree with him that 'there are unmistakeable signs of the awakening of a better spirit.' It is, however, eminently satisfactory to learn that a man of such practical experience and varied observation has not abandoned the hope that the metropolis will ere long be enabled to boast a theatre, in which the rising generation will enjoy, not spasmodically, but regularly, the best plays acted with intelligence, and placed on the stage reverentially and artistically.'

To this expression of hope I fervently respond, Amen!

FREE LANCE.





Drawn by F. Dicksee.]

[Frontispiece.]

“SCHÖN-ROHTRAUT.”

LONDON SOCIETY.

NOVEMBER, 1872.

A SIMPLETON.

A Story of the Day.

BY CHARLES READE.

[At the Author's particular request this story is not illustrated.]

CHAPTER V.

'MR. LUSIGNAN,' said he, 'the last time I was here you gave me some hopes that you might be prevailed on to trust that angel's health and happiness to my care.'

'Well, Dr. Staines, I will not beat about the bush with you. My judgment is still against this marriage: you need not look so alarmed; it does not follow I shall forbid it. I feel I have hardly a right to; for my Rosa might be in her grave now, but for you: and, another thing, when I interfered between you two I had no proof you were a man of ability; I had only your sweetheart's word for that; and I never knew a case before where a young lady's swan did not turn out a goose. Your rare ability gives you another chance in the professional battle that is before you; indeed, it puts a different face on the whole matter. I still think it premature. Come now, would it not be much wiser to wait, and secure a good practice before you marry a mere child? There—there—I only advise; I don't dictate: you shall settle it together, you two wisecrackers. Only I must make one positive condition; I have

nothing to give my child during my life-time; but one thing I have done for her; years ago I insured my life for six thousand pounds; and you must do the same. I will not have her thrown on the world a widow, with a child or two, perhaps, to support, and not a farthing; you know the insecurity of mortal life.'

'I do, I do. Why of course I will insure my life, and pay the annual premium out of my little capital, until income flows in.'

'Will you hand me over a sum sufficient to pay that premium for five years?'

'With pleasure.'

'Then I fear,' said the old gentleman, with a sigh, 'my opposition to the match must cease here. I still recommend you to wait: but—there, I might just as well advise fire and tow to live neighbours, and keep cool.'

To show the injustice of this simile, Christopher Staines started up, with his eyes all a-glow, and cried out rapturously, 'Oh, sir; may I tell her?'

'Yes, you may tell her,' said Lusignan, with a smile. 'Stop—what are you going to tell her?'

'That you consent, sir. God bless you! God bless you! Oh!'

'Yes, but that I advise you to wait.'

'I'll tell her all,' said Staines, and rushed out even as he spoke, and upset a heavy chair with a loud thud.

'Ah! ah!' cried the old gentleman, in dismay, and put his fingers in his ears—too late. 'I see,' said he: 'there will be no peace and quiet now till they are out of the house.' He lighted a soothing cigar to counteract the fracas.

'Poor little Rosa—a child but yesterday; and now to encounter the cares of a wife, and, perhaps, a mother. Ah! she is but young, but young.'

The old gentleman prophesied truly; from that moment he had no peace, till he withdrew all semblance of dissent, and even of procrastination.

Christopher insured his life for six thousand pounds, and assigned the policy to his wife. Four hundred pounds was handed to Mr. Lusignan to pay the premiums until the genius of Dr. Staines should have secured him that large professional income, which does not come all at once, even to the rare physician, who is Capax, Efficax, Sagax.

The wedding-day was named. The bridesmaids were selected; the guests invited. None refused but Uncle Philip. He declined, in his fine bold hand, to countenance in person an act of folly he disapproved. Christopher put his letter away with a momentary sigh, and would not show it Rosa. All other letters they read together, charming pastime of that happy period. Presents poured in. Silver teapots, coffee-pots, sugar-basins, cream-jugs, fruit-dishes, silver-gilt inkstands, albums, photograph-books, little

candlesticks, choice little services of china, shell salt-cellars, in a case lined with maroon velvet; a Bible, superb in binding and clasps, and everything, but the text—that was illegible; a silk scarf from Benares; a gold chain from Delhi, six feet long or nearly; a Maltese necklace, a ditto in exquisite filagree from Genoa; English brooches, a trifle too big and brainless; apostle spoons, a treble-lined parasol with ivory stick and handle; an ivory card-case, richly carved; work-box of sandalwood and ivory, &c. Mr. Lusignan's City friends, as usual with these gentlemen, sent the most valuable things. Every day one or two packages were delivered, and in opening them Rosa invariably uttered a peculiar scream of delight, and her father put his fingers in his ears; yet there was music in this very scream—if he would only have listened to it candidly, instead of fixing his mind on his vague theory of screams—so formed was she to please the ear as well as eye.

At last came a parcel she opened and stared at, smiling, and colouring like a rose, but did not scream, being too dumb-founded and perplexed; for lo! a teapot of some base material, but simple and elegant in form, being an exact reproduction of a melon; and inside this teapot a canvas bag containing ten guineas in silver, and a wash-leather bag containing twenty guineas in gold, and a slip of paper, which Rosa, being now half recovered from her stupefaction, read out to her father and Doctor Staines:

'People that buy presents blindfold give duplicates and triplicates; and men seldom choose to a woman's taste: so be pleased to accept the enclosed tea-leaves, and

buy for yourself. The teapot you can put on the hob, for it is Nickel.'

Rosa looked sore puzzled again. 'Papa,' said she, timidly, 'have we any friend that is—a little—deranged?'

'A lot.'

'Oh, then, that accounts.'

'Why no, love,' said Christopher. 'I have heard of much learning making a man mad, but never of much good sense.'

'What! Do you call this sensible?'

'Don't you?'

'I'll read it again,' said Rosa.

'Well—yes—I declare—it is not so mad as I thought: but it is very eccentric.'

Lusignan suggested there was nothing so eccentric as common sense, especially in time of wedding. 'This,' said he, 'comes from the City. It is a friend of mine, some old fox: he is throwing dust in your eyes with his reasons; his real reason was that his time is money; it would have cost the old rogue a hundred pounds' worth of time—you know the City, Christopher—to go out and choose the girl a present; so he has sent his clerk out with a cheque to buy a pewter teapot, and fill it with specie.'

'Pewter!' cried Rosa. 'No such thing! It's Nickel. What is Nickel, I wonder?'

The handwriting afforded no clue, so there the discussion ended: but it was a nice little mystery, and very convenient; made conversation. Rosa had many an animated discussion about it with her female friends.

The wedding-day came at last. The sun shone—*actually*, as Rosa observed. The carriages drove up. The bridesmaids, principally old schoolfellows and impassioned correspondents of Rosa, were

pretty, and dressed alike, and delightfully; but the bride was peerless: her southern beauty literally shone in that white satin dress and veil, and her head was regal with the crown of orange blossoms. Another crown she had, true virgin modesty. A low murmur burst from the men the moment they saw her; the old women forgave her beauty on the spot, and the young women almost pardoned it; she was so sweet and womanly, and so sisterly to her own sex.

When they started for the church she began to tremble, she scarce knew why; and, when the solemn words were said, and the ring was put on her finger, she cried a little, and looked half imploringly at her bridesmaids once, as if scared at leaving them for an untried and mysterious life with no woman near.

They were married. Then came the breakfast, that hour of uneasiness and blushing to such a bride as this; but at last she was released. She sped upstairs, thanking goodness it was over. Down came her last box. The bride followed, in a plain travelling dress, which her glorious eyes and brows, and her rich glowing cheeks, seemed to illumine: she was handed into the carriage, the bridegroom followed. All the young guests clustered about the door, armed with white shoes—slippers are gone by.

They started; the ladies flung their white shoes right and left with religious impartiality, except that not one of their missiles went at the object. The men, more skilful, sent a shower on to the roof of the carriage, which is the lucky spot. The bride kissed her hand, and managed to put off crying, though it cost her a struggle. The party hurrahed: enthusiastic youths gathered fallen

shoes, and ran and hurled them again, with cheerful yells, and away went the happy pair, the bride leaning sweetly and confidently with both her white hands on the bridegroom's shoulder, while he dried the tears that would run now at leaving home and parent for ever; and kissed her often, and encircled her with his strong arm, and murmured comfort, and love, and pride, and joy, and sweet vows of life-long tenderness into her ears, that soon stole nearer his lips to hear, and the fair cheek grew softly to his shoulder.

CHAPTER VI.

Doctor Staines and Mrs. Staines visited France, Switzerland, and the Rhine, and passed a month of Elysium, before they came to London to face their real destiny and fight the battle of life.

And here, methinks, a reader of novels may, perhaps, cry out and say, 'What manner of man is this, who marries his hero and heroine, and then, instead of leaving them happy for life, and at rest from his uneasy pen and all their other troubles, flows coolly on with their adventures?'

To this I can only reply that the old English novel is no rule to me, and Life is; and I respectfully propose an experiment; catch eight old married people, four of each sex, and say unto them, 'Sir,' or 'Madam, did the more remarkable events of your life come to you before marriage, or after?' Most of them will say 'after,' and let that be my excuse for treating the marriage of Christopher Staines and Rosa Lusignan as merely one incident in their lives; an incident which, so far from ending their story, led by degrees to more striking events,

than any that occurred to them before they were man and wife.

They returned, then, from their honey tour, and Staines, who was methodical, and kept a diary, made the following entry therein:

'We have now a life of endurance, and self-denial, and economy before us; we have to rent a house, and furnish it, and live in it, until professional income shall flow in and make all things easy: and we have two thousand five hundred pounds left to do it with.'

They came to a family hotel, and Doctor Staines went out, directly after breakfast, to look for a house. Acting on a friend's advice, he visited the streets and places north of Oxford Street, looking for a good commodious house adapted to his business. He found three or four at fair rents, neither cheap nor dear, the district being respectable and rather wealthy, but no longer fashionable. He came home with his notes, and found Rosa, beaming in a crisp *peignoir*, and her lovely head its natural size and shape, high-bred and elegant. He sat down, and with her hand in his proceeded to describe the houses to her, when a waiter threw open the door—'Mrs. John Cole.'

'Florence!' cried Rosa, starting up.

In flowed Florence: they both uttered a little squawk of delight, and went at each other like two little tigresses, and kissed in swift alternation with a singular ardour, drawing their crests back like snakes, and then darting them forward and inflicting what, to the male philosopher looking on, seemed hard kisses, violent kisses, rather than the tender ones to be expected from two tender creatures embracing each other.

'Darling,' said Rosa, 'I knew you would be the first. Didn't I

tell you so, Christopher?—My husband—my darling Florry! Sit down, love, and tell me everything: he has just been looking out for a house. Ah! you have got all that over long ago: she has been married six months. Florry, you are handsomer than ever; and what a beautiful dress! Ah, London is the place. Real Brussels, I declare;’ and she took hold of her friend’s lace, and gloated on it.

Christopher smiled ‘good-naturedly, and said, ‘I daresay you ladies have a good deal to say to each other.’

‘Oceans!’ said Rosa.

‘I will go and hunt houses again.’

‘There’s a good husband,’ said Mrs. Cole, as soon as the door closed on him: ‘and such a fine man. Why he must be six feet. Mine is rather short. But he is very good; refuses me nothing. My will is law.’

‘That is all right, you are so sensible: but I want governing a little: and I like it—actually; did the dress-maker find it, dear?’

‘Oh no. I had it by me. I bought it at Brussels, on our wedding tour: it is dearer there than in London.’

She said this as if ‘dearer’ and ‘better’ were synonymous.

‘But about your house, Rosie, dear?’

‘Yes, darling, I’ll tell you all about it. I never saw a moire this shade before; I don’t care for them in general; but this is so *distingué*.’

Florence rewarded her with a kiss.

‘The house,’ said Rosa. ‘Oh, he has seen one in Portman Street, and one in Gloucester Place.’

‘Oh, that will never do,’ cried Mrs. Cole. ‘It is no use being a physician in those out-of-the-

way places. He must be in Mayfair.’

‘Must he?’

‘Of course. Besides, then my Johnnie can call him in, when they are just going to die. Johnnie is a general prac., and makes two thousand a year; and he shall call your one in; but he must live in Mayfair. Why, Rosie, you would not be such a goose as to live in those places? they are quite gone by.’

‘I shall do whatever you advise me, dear. Oh, what a comfort to have a dear friend: and six months married, and knows things. How richly it is trimmed. Why, it is nearly all trimmings.’

‘That is the fashion.’

‘Oh!’

‘And, after that big word, there was no more to be said.

These two ladies in their conversation gravitated towards dress, and fell flat on it every half minute. That great and elevating topic held them by a silken cord: but it allowed them to flutter upwards into other topics; and in those intervals, numerous though brief, the lady, who had been married six months, found time to instruct the matrimonial novice, with great authority, and even a shade of pomposity. ‘My dear, the way ladies and gentlemen get a house—in the first place, you don’t go about yourself like that and you never go to the people themselves—or you are sure to be taken in—but to a respectable house-agent.’

‘Yes, dear, that must be the best way, one would think.’

‘Of course it is; and you ask for a house in Mayfair, and he shows you several, and recommends you the best, and sees you are not cheated.’

‘Thank you, love,’ said Rosa: ‘now I know what to do; I’ll not forget a word. And the train so

beautifully shaped! Ah, it is only in London or Paris they can make a dress flow behind like that,' &c., &c.

Dr. Staines came back to dinner in good spirits; he had found a house in Harewood Square; good entrance hall, where his gratuitous patients might sit on benches; good dining-room, where his superior patients might wait; and good library, to be used as a consulting-room. Rent only 85*l.* per annum.

But Rosa told him that would never do; a physician must be in the fashionable part of the town.

'Eventually,' said Christopher; 'but surely at first starting—and you know they say little boats should not go too far from shore.'

Then Rosa repeated all her friend's arguments, and seemed so unhappy at the idea of not living near her, that Staines, who had not yet said the hard word 'no' to her, gave in; consoling his prudence with the reflection that, after all, Mr. Cole could put many a guinea in his way, for Mr. Cole was middle-aged—though his wife was young—and had really a very large practice.

So next day, the newly-wedded pair called on a house-agent in Mayfair; and his son and partner went with them to several places. The rents of houses equal to that in Harewood Square were 300*l.* a year at least, and a premium to boot.

Christopher told him these were quite beyond the mark. 'Very well,' said the agent. 'Then I'll show you a Bijou.'

Rosa clapped her hands. 'That is the thing for us. We don't want a large house, only a beautiful one, and in Mayfair.'

'Then the Bijou will be sure to suit you.'

He took them to the bijou.

The Bijou had a small dining-

room with one very large window in two sheets of plate glass, and a projecting balcony full of flowers; a still smaller library, which opened on a square yard enclosed. Here were a great many pots, with flowers dead or dying from neglect. On the first floor a fair-sized drawing-room, and a tiny one at the back: on the second floor, one good bed-room, and a dressing-room, or little bed-room: three garrets above.

Rosa was in ecstasies; 'It is a nest,' said she.

'It is a bank note,' said the agent, simulating equal enthusiasm, after his fashion. 'You can always sell the lease again for more money.'

Christopher kept cool. 'I don't want a house to sell, but to live in, and do my business; I am a physician: now the drawing-room is built over the entrance to a mews. The back rooms all look into a mews: we shall have the eternal noise and smell of a mews. My wife's rest will be broken by the carriages rolling in and out. The hall is fearfully small and stuffy. The rent is abominably high; and what is the premium for, I wonder?'

'Always a premium in Mayfair, sir. A lease is property here: the gentleman is not acquainted with this part, madam.'

'Oh yes he is,' said Rosa, as boldly as a six years' wife: 'he knows everything.'

'Then he knows that a house of this kind at 130*l.* a-year, in Mayfair, is a bank note.'

Staines turned to Rosa. 'The poor patients, where am I to receive them?'

'In the stable,' suggested the house-agent.

'Oh!' said Rosa, shocked.

'Well, then, the coach-house. Why there's plenty of room for a brougham, and one horse, and

fifty poor patients at a time: beggars mus'n't be choosers; if you give them physio gratis, that is enough: you ain't bound to find 'em a palace to sit down in, and hot coffee and rump-steaks all round, Doctor.'

This tickled Rosa so that she burst out laughing, and thenceforward giggled at intervals, wit of this refined nature having all the charm of novelty for her.

They inspected the stables, which were indeed the one redeeming feature in the horrid little bijou: and then the agent would show them the kitchen, and the new stove. He expatiated on this to Mrs. Staines. 'Cook a dinner for thirty people, madam.'

'And there's room for them to eat it—in the road,' said Staines.

The agent reminded him there were larger places to be had, by a very simple process, viz., paying for them.

Staines thought of the large, comfortable house in Harewood Square. 180*l.* a-year for this poky little hole? he groaned.

'Why it is nothing at all for a Bijou.'

'But it is too much for a Band-box.'

Rosa laid her hand on his arm, with an imploring glance.

'Well,' said he, 'I'll submit to the rent, but I really cannot give the premium, it is too ridiculous. He ought to bribe me to rent it, not I him.'

'Can't be done without, sir.'

'Well, I'll give 100*l.* and no more.'

'Impossible, sir.'

'Then good morning. Now, dearest, just come and see the house at Harewood Square: 85*l.* and no premium.'

'Will you oblige me with your address, Doctor?' said the agent.

'Doctor Staines, Morley's Hotel.' And so they left Mayfair.

Rosa sighed, and said, 'Oh the nice little place: and we have lost it for 200*l.*'

'Two hundred pounds is a great deal for us to throw away.'

'Being near the Coles would soon have made that up to you: and such a cosy little nest.'

'Well, the house will not run away.'

'But somebody is sure to snap it up. It is a bijou.' She was disappointed, and half inclined to pout. But she vented her feelings in a letter to her beloved Florry, and appeared at dinner as sweet as usual.

During dinner a note came from the agent, accepting Dr. Staines's offer. He glozed the matter thus: he had persuaded the owner it was better to take a good tenant at a moderate loss, than to let the bijou be uninhabited during the present rainy season. An assignment of the lease—which contained the usual covenants—would be prepared immediately, and Doctor Staines could have possession in forty-eight hours, by paying the premium.

Rosa was delighted, and as soon as dinner was over, and the waiters gone, she came and kissed Christopher. He smiled, and said, 'Well, you are pleased; that is the principal thing. I have saved 200*l.*, and that is something. It will go towards furnishing.'

'La, yes!' said Rosa, 'I forgot. We shall have to get furniture now. How nice!' It was a pleasure the man of forecast could have willingly dispensed with; but he smiled at her, and they discussed furniture, and Christopher, whose retentive memory had picked up a little of everything, said there were wholesale upholsterers in the City, who sold cheaper than the West-end houses, and he thought the best way was to measure the rooms in the bijou,

and go to the City with a clear idea of what they wanted; ask the prices of various necessary articles, and then make a list, and demand a discount of fifteen per cent. on the whole order, being so considerable, and paid for in cash.

Rosa acquiesced, and told Christopher he was the cleverest man in England.

About nine o'clock Mrs. Cole came in to condole with her friend, and heard the good news. When Rosa told her how they thought of furnishing, she said, 'Oh no, you must not do that; you will pay double for everything. That is the mistake Johnnie and I made; and after that a friend of mine took me to the auction-rooms, and saw everything sold—oh, such bargains; half, and less than half, their value. She has furnished her house almost entirely from sales, and she has the loveliest things in the world—such ducks of tables, and *jardinières*, and things; and beautiful rare china;—her house swarms with it—for an old song. A sale is the place. And then so amusing.'

'Yes, but' said Christopher, 'I should not like my wife to encounter a public room.'

'Not alone, of course; but with me. La! Dr. Staines, they are too full of buying and selling, to trouble their heads about us.'

'Oh, Christopher, do let me go with her. Am I always to be a child?'

Thus appealed to before a stranger, Staines replied warmly, 'No, dearest, no: you cannot please me better than by beginning life in earnest. If you two ladies together can face an auction-room, go by all means; only I must ask you not to buy china, or ormolu, or anything that will break or spoil, but only solid, good furniture.'

'Won't you come with us?'

'No; or you might feel yourself in leading-strings. Remember the bijou is a small house; choose your furniture to fit it, and then we shall save something by its being so small.'

This was Wednesday. There was a weekly sale in Oxford Street on Friday; and the ladies made the appointment accordingly.

Next day, after breakfast, Christopher was silent and thoughtful a while, and at last said to Rosa, 'I'll show you I don't look on you as a child: I'll consult you in a delicate matter.'

Rosa's eyes sparkled.

'It is about my Uncle Philip. He has been very cruel; he has wounded me deeply; he has wounded me through my wife. I never thought he would refuse to come to our marriage.'

'And did he? You never showed me his letter.'

'You were not my wife then. I kept an affront from you: but now, you see, I keep nothing.'

'Dear Christie!'

'I am so happy, I have got over that sting—almost: and the memory of many kind acts comes back to me: and—I don't know what to do. It seems ungrateful not to visit him: it seems almost mean to call.'

'I'll tell you; take me to see him directly. He won't hate us for ever, if he sees us often. We may as well begin at once. Nobody hates me long.'

Christopher was proud of his wife's courage and wisdom: he kissed her; begged her to put on the plainest dress she could, and they went together to call on Uncle Philip.

When they got to his house in Gloucester Place, Portman Square, Rosa's heart began to quake, and she was right glad when the servant said 'Not at home.'

They left their cards and ad-

dress; and she persuaded Christopher to take her to the sale-room to see the things.

A lot of brokers were there, like vultures, and one after another stepped forward and pestered them to employ him in the morning. Dr. Staines declined their services civilly, but firmly, and he and Rosa looked over a quantity of furniture, and settled what sort of things to buy.

Another broker came up, and whenever the couple stopped before an article, proceeded to praise it as something most extraordinary. Staines listened in cold satirical silence, and told his wife, in French, to do the same. Notwithstanding their marked disgust, the impudent intrusive fellow stuck to them, and forced his venal criticism on them and made them uncomfortable, and shortened their tour of observation.

'I think I shall come with you to-morrow,' said Christopher, 'or I shall have these blackguards pestering you.'

'Oh, Florry will send them to the right about. She is as brave as a lion.'

Next day Dr. Staines was sent for into the City at twelve, to pay the money, and receive the lease of the bijou, and this and the taking possession occupied him till four o'clock, when he came to his hotel.

Meantime, his wife and Mrs. Cole had gone to the auction-room.

It was a large room, with a good sprinkling of people, but not crowded, except about the table. At the head of this table—full twenty feet long—was the auctioneer's pulpit, and the lots were brought in turn to the other end of the table for sight and sale.

'We must try and get a seat,' said the enterprising Mrs. Cole, and pushed boldly in; the timid Rosa followed strictly in her wake,

and so evaded the human waves her leader clove. They were importuned at every step, by brokers thrusting catalogues on them, with offers of their services, yet they soon got to the table. A gentleman resigned one chair, a broker another; and they were seated.

Mrs. Staines let down half her veil; but Mrs. Cole surveyed the company point-blank.

The broker, who had given up his seat, and now stood behind Rosa, offered her his catalogue. 'No, thank you,' said Rosa, 'I have one;' and she produced it, and studied it, yet managed to look furtively at the company.

There were not above a dozen private persons visible from where Rosa sat—perhaps as many more in the whole room. They were easily distinguishable by their cleanly appearance; the dealers, male or female, were more or less rusty, greasy, dirty, aquiline. Not even the amateurs were brightly dressed; that fundamental error was confined to Mesdames Cole and Staines. The experienced, however wealthy, do not hunt bargains in silk and satin.

The auctioneer called 'Lot 7. Four saucepans, two trays, a kettle, a bootjack, and a towel-horse.'

These were put up at two shillings, and speedily knocked down for five to a fat old woman in a greasy velvet jacket; blind industry had sowed bugles on it, not artfully, but agriculturally.

'The lady on the left!' said the auctioneer to his clerk. That meant, 'Get the money.'

The old lady plunged a huge paw into a huge pocket, and pulled out a huge handful of coin—copper, silver, and gold—and paid for the lot: and Rosa surveyed her dirty hands and nails with innocent dismay. 'Oh, what a dreadful creature!' she whispered; 'and what can she want with those old

rubbishy things? I saw a hole in one from here.' The broker overheard, and said, 'She is a dealer, ma'am, and the things were given away. She'll sell them for a guinea, easy.'

'Didn't I tell you?' said Mrs. Cole.

Soon after this the superior lots came on, and six very neat bedroom chairs were sold to all appearance for fifteen shillings.

The next lot was identical; and Rosa hazarded a bid, 'Sixteen shillings.'

Instantly some dealer, one of the hooked-nosed that gathered round each lot as it came to the foot of the table, cried 'Eighteen shillings.'

'Nineteen,' said Rosa.

'A guinea,' said the dealer.

'Don't let it go,' said the broker behind her. 'Don't let it go, ma'am.'

She colored at the intrusion, and left off bidding directly, and addressed herself to Mrs. Cole. 'Why should I give so much, when the last were sold for fifteen shillings?'

The real reason was, that the first lot was not bid for at all, except by the proprietor. However, the broker gave her a very different solution; he said, 'The trade always run up a lady or a gentleman. Let me bid for you; they won't run me up; they know better.'

Rosa did not reply, but looked at Mrs. Cole.

'Yes, dear,' said that lady, 'you had much better let him bid for you.'

'Very well,' said Rosa. 'You can bid for this chest of drawers—Lot 25.'

When Lot 25 came on, the broker bid in the silliest possible way, if his object had been to get a bargain; he began to bid early, and ostentatiously; the article was protected by somebody or other

there present, who now of course saw his way clear: he ran it up audaciously, and it was purchased for Rosa at about the price it could have been bought for at a shop.

The next thing she wanted was a set of oak chairs.

They went up to twenty-eight pounds; then she said, 'I shall give no more, sir.'

'Better not lose them,' said the agent; 'they are a great bargain,' and bid another pound for her on his own responsibility.

They were still run up, and Rosa peremptorily refused to give any more. She lost them accordingly, by good luck. Her faithful broker looked blank; so did the proprietor.

But, as the sale proceeded, she being young, the competition, though most of it sham, being artful and exciting, and the traitor she employed constantly puffing every article, she was drawn in to wishing for things, and bidding by her feelings.

Then her traitor played a game that has been played a hundred times, and the perpetrators never once lynched, as they ought to be, on the spot; he signalled a confederate with a hooked nose; the Jew rascal bid against the Christian scoundrel, and so they ran up the more enticing things to twice their value under the hammer.

Rosa got flushed, and her eye gleamed like a gambler's, and she bought away like wildfire. In which sport she caught sight of an old gentleman with little black eyes, that kept twinkling at her.

She complained of these eyes to Mrs. Cole. 'Why does he twinkle so? I can see it is at me. I am doing something foolish—I know I am.'

Mrs. Cole turned and fixed a haughty stare on the old gentleman. Would you believe it? instead of sinking through the floor,

he sat his ground, and retorted with a cool, clear grin.

But now, whenever Rosa's agent bid for her, and the other man of straw against him, the black eyes twinkled, and Rosa's courage began to ooze away. At last she said, 'That is enough for one day. I shall go. Who could bear those eyes?'

The broker took her address; so did the auctioneer's clerk. The auctioneer asked her for no deposit; her beautiful, innocent, and high-bred face was enough for a man who was always reading faces, and interpreting them.

And so they retired.

But this charming sex is like that same auctioneer's hammer, it cannot go abruptly. It is always going—going—going—a long time before it is gone. I think it would perhaps loiter at the door of a gaol, with the order of release in its hand, after six years confinement. Getting up to go quenches in it the desire to go. So these ladies having got up to go, turned and lingered, and hung fire so long, that at last another set of oak chairs came up. 'Oh! I must see what those go for,' said Rosa, at the door.

The bidding was mighty languid now Rosa's broker was not stimulating it; and the auctioneer was just knocking down twelve chairs, —oak and leather—and two arm chairs, for twenty pounds, when, casting his eyes around, he caught sight of Rosa looking at him rather excited. He looked inquiringly at her. She nodded slightly; he knocked them down to her at twenty guineas, and they were really a great bargain.

'Twenty-two,' cried a dealer.

'Too late,' said the auctioneer.

'I spoke with the hammer, sir.'

'After the hammer, Isaacs.'

'Shelp me God, we was together.'

One or two more of his tribe confirmed this pious falsehood, and clamoured to have them put up again.

'Call the next lot,' said the auctioneer, peremptorily. 'Make up your mind a little quicker next time, Mr. Isaacs; you have been long enough at it to know the value of oak and moroccar.'

Mrs. Staines and her friend now started for Morley's Hotel, but went round by Regent Street: whereby they got glued at Peter Robinson's window, and nine other windows; and it was nearly five o'clock when they reached Morley's. As they came near the door of their sitting-room, Mrs. Staines heard somebody laughing and talking to her husband. The laugh, to her subtle ears, did not sound musical and genial, but keen, satirical, unpleasant: so it was with some timidity she opened the door; and there sat the old chap with the twinkling eyes. Both parties stared at each other a moment.

'Why, it is them,' cried the old gentleman; 'ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!'

Rosa coloured all over, and felt guilty somehow, and looked miserable.

'Rosa, dear,' said Doctor Staines, 'this is our Uncle Philip.'

'Oh!' said Rosa, and turned red and pale by turns: for she had a great desire to propitiate Uncle Philip.

'You were in the auction-room, sir,' said Mrs. Cole, severely.

'I was, madam.' He! he!

'Furnishing a house?'

'No, ma'am. I go to a dozen sales a week; but it is not to buy; I enjoy the humours. Did you ever hear of Robert Burton, ma'am?'

'No. Yes; a great traveller, isn't he? Discovered the Nile—or the Niger—or something.'

This majestic vagueness staggered old Crusty at first; but he recovered his equilibrium, and said, 'Why, yes, now I think of it, you are right; he has travelled farther than most of us; for about two centuries ago he visited that bourne whence no traveller returns. Well, when he was alive—he was a student of Christchurch—he used to go down to a certain bridge over the Isis, and enjoy the chaff of the bargemen. Now there are no bargemen left to speak of: the mantle of Bobby Burton's bargees has fallen on the Jews and demi-semi-Christians that buy and sell furniture at the weekly auctions: thither I repair to hear what little coarse wit is left us: used to go to the House of Commons; but they are getting too civil by half for my money. Besides, characters come out in an auction. For instance, only this very day I saw two ladies enter, in gorgeous attire, like heifers decked for sacrifice, and reduce their spoliation to a certainty by employing a broker to bid. Now, what is a broker? A fellow who is to be paid a shilling in the pound for all articles purchased. What is his interest, then? To buy cheap? Clearly not. He is paid in proportion to the dearness of the article.

Rosa's face began to work piteously.

'Accordingly, what did the broker in question do? He winked to another broker, and these two bid against one another, over their victim's head, and ran everything she wanted up at least a hundred per cent. above the value. So open and transparent a swindle I have seldom seen, even in an auction-room. Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!'

His mirth was interrupted by Rosa going to her husband, hiding her head on his shoulder, and meekly crying.

Christopher comforted her like

a man. 'Don't you cry, darling,' said he; 'how should a pure creature like you know the badness of the world all in a moment? If it is my wife you are laughing at, Uncle Philip, let me tell you this is the wrong place. I'd rather a thousand times have her as she is, than armed with the cunning and suspicions of a hardened old worldling like you.'

'With all my heart,' said Uncle Philip, who, to do him justice, could take blows as well as give them: 'but why employ a broker? why pay a scoundrel five per cent. to make you pay a hundred per cent.? why pay a noisy fool a farthing to open his mouth for you when you have taken the trouble to be there yourself, and have got a mouth of your own to bid discreetly with? Was ever such an absurdity?' He began to get angry.

'Do you want to quarrel with me, Uncle Philip?' said Christopher, firing up: 'because sneering at my Rosa is the way, and the only way, and the sure way.'

'Oh! no,' said Rosa, interposing. 'Uncle Philip was right. I am very foolish and inexperienced: but I am not so vain as to turn from good advice. I will never employ a broker again, sir.'

Uncle Philip smiled, and looked pleased.

Mrs. Cole caused a diversion by taking leave, and Rosa followed her downstairs. On her return she found Christopher telling his uncle all about the Bijou, and how he had taken it for 130*l.* a year and 100*l.* premium, and Uncle Philip staring fearfully.

At last he found his tongue. 'The Bijou!' said he. 'Why, that is a name they gave to a little den in Dear Street, Mayfair. You haven't ever been and taken that! Built over a mews.'

Christopher groaned. 'That is the place, I fear.'

'Why, the owner is a friend of mine; an old patient. Stables stunk him out. Let it to a man; I forget his name. Stables stunk him out. He said, "I shall go." "You can't," said my friend; "you have taken a lease." "Lease be d—d," said the other; "I never took *your* house; here's quite a large stench not specified in your description of the property: *it can't be the same place*." flung the lease at his head, and cut like the wind to foreign parts less odoriferous. I'd have got you the hole for ninety; but you are like your wife, you must go to an agent. What, don't you know that an agent is a man acting for you with an interest opposed to yours? Employing an agent: it is like a Trojan seeking the aid of a Greek. You needn't cry, Mrs. Staines; your husband has been let in deeper than you have. Now you are young people beginning life: I'll give you a piece of advice. Employ others to do what you can't do, and it must be done; but never to do anything you can do better for yourselves. Agent! the word is derived from a Latin word, "*agere*," to do; and agents act up to their etymology, for they invariably *do* the nincompoop that employs them, or deals with them, in any mortal way. I'd have got you that beastly little bijou for 90*l.* a year.'

Uncle Philip went away crusty, leaving the young couple finely mortified and discouraged.

That did not last very long; Christopher noted the experience, and Uncle Phil's wisdom in his diary, and then took his wife on his knee, and comforted her, and said, 'Never mind; experience is worth money, and it always has to be bought. Those who cheat us will die poorer than we shall, if we are honest and economical.

I have observed that people are seldom ruined by the vices of others; these may hurt them, of course; but it is only their own faults and follies that can destroy them.'

'Ah! Christie,' said Rosa, 'you are a man. Oh! the comfort of being married to a *man*. A man sees the best side. I do adore men. Dearest, I will waste no more of your money. I will go to no more sales.'

Christopher saw she was deeply mortified, and he said, quietly, 'On the contrary, you will go to the very next. Only take Uncle Philip's advice, employ no broker; and watch the prices things fetch when you are not bidding; and keep cool.'

She caressed his ears with both her white hands, and thanked him for giving her another trial. So that trouble melted in the sunshine of conjugal love.

Notwithstanding the agent's solemn assurance, the bijou was out of repair. Doctor Staines detected internal odours, as well as those that flowed in from the mews. He was not the man to let his wife perish by miasma; so he had the drains all up, and actually found brick drains, and a cesspool: he stopped that up, and laid down new pipe-drains, with a good fall, and properly trapped. The old drains were hidden, after the manner of builders. He had the whole course of his new drains marked upon all the floors they passed under, and had several stones and boards hinged, to facilitate examination at any period.

But all this, with the necessary cleaning, whitewashing, painting, and papering, ran away with money. Then came Rosa's purchases, which, to her amazement, amounted to 190*l.*, and not a carpet, curtain, or bed amongst

the lot. Then there was the carriage home from the auction-room, an expense one avoids by buying at a shop, and the broker claimed his shilling in the pound. This, however, Staines refused. The man came and blustered. Rosa, who was there, trembled. Then, for the first time, she saw her husband's brow lower; he seemed transfigured, and looked terrible. 'You scoundrel,' said he, 'you set another villain like yourself to bid against you, and you betrayed the innocent lady that employed you. I could indict you and your confederate for a conspiracy: I take the goods out of respect for my wife's credit, but you shall gain nothing by swindling her. Be off, you heartless miscreant, or I'll——'

'I'll take the law, if you do.'

'Take it, then: I'll give you something to howl for,' and he seized him with a grasp so tremendous that the fellow cried out in dismay, 'Oh! don't hit me, sir; pray don't.'

On this abject appeal, Staines tore the door open with his left hand, and spun the broker out into the passage with his right. Two movements of this angry Hercules, and the man was literally whirled out of sight with a rapidity and swiftness almost ludicrous; it was like a trick in a pantomime: a clatter on the stairs betrayed that he had gone down the first few steps in a wholesale and irregular manner, though he had just managed to keep his feet.

As for Staines, he stood there still lowering like thunder, and his eyes like hot coals; but his wife threw her tender arms around him, and begged him consolingly not to mind.

She was trembling like an aspen.

"Dear me," said Christopher, with a ludicrous change to

marked politeness and respect; 'I forgot *you*, in my righteous indignation.' Next he became uxorious. 'Did they frighten her, a duck? Sit on my knee, darling, and pull my hair, for not being more considerate—there—there.'

This was followed by the whole, absurd, soothing process as practised by manly husbands upon quivering and somewhat hysterical wives; and ended with a formal apology. 'You must not think that I am passionate; on the contrary, I am always practising self-government. My maxim is, *Animum rege qui nisi paret imperat*; and that means make your temper your servant, or else it will be your master. But to ill-use my dear little wife, it is unnatural, it is monstrous, it makes my blood boil.'

'Oh dear! don't go into another. It is all over. I can't bear to see you in a passion; you are so terrible, so beautiful. Ah! they are fine things, courage and strength. There's nothing I admire so much.'

'Why they are as common as dirt. What I admire is modesty, timidity, sweetness; the sensitive cheek that pales or blushes at a word, the bosom that quivers, and clings to a fellow whenever anything goes wrong.'

'Oh, that is what you admire, is it?' said Rosa, drily.

'Admire it?' said Christopher, not seeing the trap, 'I adore it.'

'Then, Christie dear, you are a Simpleton; that is all. And we are made for one another.'

The house was to be furnished and occupied as soon as possible; so Mrs. Staines and Mrs. Cole went to another sale-room. Mrs. Staines remembered all Uncle Philip had said, and went plainly dressed; but her friend declined

to sacrifice her showy dress to her friend's interests. Rosa thought that a little unkind, but said nothing.

In this auction-room they easily got a place at the table: but did not find it heaven; for a number of second-hand carpets were in the sale, and these, brimful of dust, were all shown on the table, and the dirt choked and poisoned our fair friends. Brokers pestered them, until at last, Rosa, smarting under her late exposure, addressed the auctioneer quietly, in her silvery tones: 'Sir, these gentlemen are annoying me by forcing their services on me. I do not intend to buy at all unless I can be allowed to bid for myself.'

When Rosa, blushing and amazed at her own boldness, uttered these words, she little foresaw their effect. She had touched a popular sore.

'You are quite right, madam,' said a respectable tradesman opposite her. 'What business have these dirty fellows, without a shilling in their pocket, to go and force themselves on a lady against her will?'

'It has been complained of in the papers again and again,' said another.

'What, mayn't we live as well as you?' retorted a broker.

'Yes, but not to force yourself on a lady. Why she'd give you in charge of the police if you tried it on outside.'

Then there was a downright clamour of discussion and chaff.

Presently up rises very slowly a countryman so colossal, that it seemed as if he would never have done getting up; and gives his experiences. He informed the company, in a broad Yorkshire dialect, that he did a bit in furniture, and at first starting these brokers buzzed about him like flies, and pestered him. 'Aah

damned 'em pretty hard,' said he, 'but they didn't heed any. So then ah spoke 'em civil, and ah said, "Well, lads, I dinna come fra Yorkshire to sit like a dummy and let you buy wi' my brass: the first that pesters me again ah'll just fell him on t' plaace, like a caulf, and ah 'm not very sure he'll get up again in a hurry." So they dropped me like a hot potatoe; never pestered me again. But if they won't give over pestering you, mistress, ah'll come round and just stand behind your chair, and bring nieve with me,' showing a fist like a leg of mutton.

'No, no,' said the auctioneer, 'that will not do. I will have no disturbance here. Call the policeman.'

While the clerk went to the door for the bobby, a gentleman reminded the auctioneer that the journals had repeatedly drawn attention to the nuisance.

'Fault of the public, not mine, sir. Policeman, stand behind that lady's chair, and if anybody annoys her put him quietly into the street.'

'This auction-room will be to let soon,' said a voice at the end of the table.

'This auction-room,' said the auctioneer, master of the gay or grave at a moment's notice, 'is supported by the public and the trade; it is not supported by paupers.'

A Jew upholsterer put in his word. 'I do my own business: but I like to let a poor man live.'

'Jonathan,' said the auctioneer to one of his servants, 'after this sale you may put up the shutters: we have gone and offended Mr. Jacobs. He keeps a shop in Blind Alley, Whitechapel. Now then, Lot 69.'

Rosa bid timidly for one or two lots, and bought them cheap.

The auctioneer kept looking her way, and she had only to nod.

The obnoxious broker got opposite her and ran her up a little out of spite; but, as he had only got half-a-crown about him, and no means of doubling it, he dared not go far.

On the other side of the table was a figure to which Rosa's eyes often turned with interest: a fair young boy about twelve years old; he had golden hair, and was in deep mourning. His appearance interested Rosa, and she wondered how he came there, and why: he looked like a lamb wedged in among wolves, a flower among weeds. As the lots proceeded the boy seemed to get uneasy; and at last, when Lot 73 was put up, anybody could see in his poor little face that he was there to bid for it.

'Lot 73, an arm-chair covered in morocco. An excellent and most useful article. Should not be at all surprised if it was made by Gillow.'

'Gillow would though,' said Jacobs, who owed him a turn.

Chorus of dealers. 'Haw! haw!'

The auctioneer. 'I like to hear some people run a lot down; shows they are going to bid for it in earnest. Well, name your own price. Five pounds to begin?'

Now if nobody had spoken the auctioneer would have gone on, 'Well, four pounds then, three, two, whatever you like,' and at last obtained a *bond fide* offer of thirty shillings; but the moment he said 'Five pounds to begin,' the boy in black lifted up his childish treble, and bid thus, 'five pound ten'—'six pounds'—'six pound ten'—'seven pounds'—'seven pound ten'—'eight pounds'—'eight pound ten'—'nine pounds'—'nine pound ten'—'ten pounds!' without interruption, and indeed almost in a breath.

There was a momentary pause

of amazement, and then an outburst of chaff.

'Nice little boy!'

'Didn't he say his lesson well?'

'Favour us with your card, sir. You are a gent as knows how to buy.'

'What did he stop for! If it's worth ten it is worth a hundred.'

'Bless the child!' said a female dealer, kindly, 'what made you go on like that? Why there was no bid against you! you'd have got it for two pounds—a rickety old thing.'

Young master began to whimper. 'Why the gentleman said, "Five pounds to begin." It was the chair poor grandpapa always sat in, and all the things are sold, and mamma said it would break her heart to lose it. She was too ill to come, so she sent me. She told me I was not to let it be sold away from us for less than ten pounds, or she sh—should be m—m—miserable,' and the poor little fellow began to cry. Rosa followed suit promptly but unobtrusively.

'Sentiment always costs money,' said Mr. Jacobs, gravely.

'How do you know?' asked Mr. Cohen. 'Have you got any on hand? I never seen none at your shop.'

Some tempting things now came up, and Mrs. Staines bid freely; but all of a sudden she looked down the table, and there was Uncle Philip twinkling as before. 'Oh dear! what am I doing now?' thought she. 'I have got no broker.'

She bid on, but in fear and trembling because of those twinkling eyes. At last she mustered courage, wrote on a leaf of her pocket-book, and passed it down to him. 'It would be only kind to warn me. What am I doing wrong?'

He sent her back a line directly: 'Auctioneer running you up him—'

self. Follow his eye when he bids; you will see there is no *bond fide* bidder at your prices.'

Rosa did so, and found that it was true.

She nodded to Uncle Philip; and, with her expressive face, asked him what she should do.

The old boy must have his joke. So he wrote back—'Tell him, as you see he has a fancy for certain articles, you would not be so discourteous as to bid against him.'

The next article but one was a drawing-room suite Rosa wanted; but the auctioneer bid against her; so, at eighteen pounds, she stopped.

'It is against you, madam,' said the auctioneer.

'Yes, sir,' said Rosa; 'but as you are the only bidder, and you have been so kind to me, I would not think of opposing you.'

The words were scarcely out of her mouth when they were greeted with a roar of Homeric laughter that literally shook the room, and this time not at the expense of the innocent speaker.

'That's into your mutton, governor.'

'Sharp's the word this time.'

'I say, governor, don't you want a broker to bid for ye?'

'Wink at me next time, sir; I'll do the office for you.'

'No greenhorns left now.'

'That lady won't give a ten pound note for her grandfather's arm-chair.'

'Oh yes she will, if it's stuffed with bank notes.'

'Put the next lot up with the owner's name and the reserve price. Open business.'

'And sing a psalm at starting.'

'A little less noise in Judæa, if you please,' said the auctioneer, who had now recovered from the blow. Lot 97.'

This was a very pretty marqueterie cabinet; it stood against the

wall, and Rosa had set her heart upon it. Nobody would bid. She had muzzled the auctioneer effectually.

'Your own price.'

'Two pounds,' said Rosa.

A dealer offered guineas; and it advanced slowly to four pounds and half-a-crown, at which it was about to be knocked down to Rosa, when suddenly a new bidder arose in the broker Rosa had rejected: they bid slowly and sturdily against each other, until a line was given to Rosa from Uncle Philip.

'This time it is your own friend, the snipe-nosed woman. She telegraphed a broker.'

Rosa read, and crushed the note.

'Six guineas,' said she.

'Six-ten.'

'Seven.'

'Seven-ten.'

'Eight.'

'Eight-ten.'

'Ten guineas,' said Rosa; and then, with feminine cunning, stealing a sudden glance, caught her friend leaning back and signalling the broker not to give in.

'Eleven pounds.'

'Twelve.'

'Thirteen.'

'Fourteen.'

'Sixteen.'

'Eighteen.'

'Twenty.'

'Twenty guineas.'

'It is yours, my faithful friend,' said Rosa, turning suddenly round on Mrs. Cole with a magnificent glance no one would have thought her capable of.

Then she rose and stalked away.

Dumb-founded for the moment, Mrs. Cole followed her, and stopped her at the door.

'Why, Rosie dear, it is the only thing I have bid for. There I've sat by your side like a mouse.'

Rosa turned gravely towards her. 'You know it is not that.'

You had only to tell me you wanted it. I would never have been so mean as to bid against you.'

'Mean, indeed! said Florence, tossing her head.

'Yes, mean; to draw back and hide behind the friend you were with, and employ the very rogue she had turned off. But it is my own fault. Cecilia warned me against you. She always said you were a treacherous girl.'

'And I say you are an impudent little minx. Only just married, and going about like two vagabonds, and talk to me like that!'

'We are not going about like two vagabonds. We have taken a house in Mayfair.'

'Say a stable.'

'It was by your advice, you false-hearted creature.'

'You are a fool.'

'You are worse; you are a traitress.'

'Then don't you have anything to do with me.'

'Heaven forbid I should. You treacherous thing.'

'You insolent—insolent—I hate you.'

'And I despise you.'

'I always hated you at bottom.'

'That's why you pretended to love me, you wretch.'

'Well, I pretend no more. I am your enemy for life.'

'Thank you. You have told the truth for once in your life.'

'I have. And he shall never call in your husband; so you may leave Mayfair as soon as you like.'

'Not to please you, madam.' We can get on without traitors.'

And so they parted, with eyes that gleamed like tigers.

Rosa drove home in great agitation, and tried to tell Christopher, but choked, and became hysterical. The husband phy-

sician coaxed and scolded her out of that; and presently in came Uncle Philip, full of the humours of the auction-room. He told about the little boy with a delight that disgusted Mrs. Staines; and then was particularly merry on female friendships. 'Fancy a man going to a sale with his friend, and bidding against him on the sly.'

'She is no friend of mine. We are enemies for life.'

'And you were to be friends till death,' said Staines, with a sigh.

Philip inquired who she was.

'Mrs. John Cole.'

'Not of Curzon Street?'

'Yes.'

'And you have quarrelled with her?'

'Yes.'

'Well, but her husband is a general practitioner.'

'She is a traitress.'

'But her husband could put a good deal of money in Christopher's way.'

'I can't help it. She is a traitress.'

'And you have quarrelled with her about an old wardrobe.'

'No, for her disloyalty, and her base, good-for-nothingness. Oh! oh! oh!'

Uncle Philip got up, looking sour. 'Good afternoon, Mrs. Christopher,' said he, very drily.

Christopher accompanied him to the foot of the stairs.

'Well, Christopher,' said he, 'Matrimony is a blunder at the best; and you have not done the thing by halves. You have married a simpleton. She will be your ruin.'

'Uncle Philip, since you only come here to insult us, I hope in future you will stay at home.'

'Oh! with pleasure, sir. Good-bye.'

(To be continued.)

SCHÖN-ROHTRAUT.

ONCE on a time there lived a king's daughter, Rohtraut hight, who was beautiful as kings' daughters always were in the good old time, and far more sensible; for instead of moping at home over embroidery frames and illuminated missals, as most demoiselles were then wont, she roamed the wild woods hunting and fishing, attended only by her page. The old, old story; she was so very beautiful—so near him, and yet so far. Can one wonder that the youth grew sad, and communed with himself—

'O that I were a king his son!

Rohtraut—fair Rohtraut, I love thee so.
Lie still, my heart.'

But the heart would not lie still, and it fell on a day, as they rested under a large oak-tree, that fair Rohtraut noticed the page's woe-begone, wistful looks, and laughed a merry laugh, and said: 'Why do you look at me so longingly? kiss me, if you dare!' and his knees knocked together, his colour paled, all his heart went out of him, and settled in one long kiss on those laughing lips, and then, all silently, they rode home together; but the page laughed joyously to himself, for he said: 'Wert thou made empress to-morrow, it matters not, for the thousand leaves of the forest know I have kissed Schön-Rohtraut's mouth.'

Have we not all kissed Schön-Rohtraut's mouth? Unhappy he or she who has no tender memories, no pleasant associations of which none but the leaves of the forest wot. Surely they are better things to people the mind with, than the ghosts of cares and troubles, that come soon enough and uninvited; shadowy as ghosts

they are, too, these reminiscences. A pressure of the hand, a whispering by moonlight, a lock of hair, an old song, any amount of nonsense, and yet how dear! That grim, grizzled old bachelor has hardened in life's hammering, and is, to the world's judgment, a greedy old skinflint, with no ideas beyond his money; and yet he has a soft corner in his heart, and many a time when you fancy him thinking of money bags, is dreaming happily of the long ago when he kissed Schön-Rohtraut's mouth. And she who first wakened his love is an old woman now; but what a happy light shines from her face as she recalls the love of her youth! To her he is a hero still. Down the long vista of years, she pictures him gay, generous, good as when they first whispered soft nothings on that glad sea coast. Their lives are the happier for their memories, and yet they would never have been happy together had they married. Half the charm of kissing Schön-Rohtraut's mouth lies in the ideality. You are, it may be, a staid married man, and love your wife dearly, and the love of your youth has grown fat and fussy, Jack tells you. What matters it? For you she lives, and will live always, a fair, fairy-figured girl, bright and sweet as those summer days that bloomed for you—how many years ago? You thought her very nearly an angel then, and you have had no opportunity to change your opinion; whilst you have lived too long, and in too intimate a relationship with your wife, not to be aware of many of her faults and foibles. You know well that she is no angel, and are glad

enough too—a palpable angel would not prove a very pleasant companion through life, pleasant though the ideal be to dream about. So I don't think wives or husbands need be jealous that their demure partners through life have kissed Schön-Rohtraut's mouth. Indeed, the love of one's begetters is generally allowed to be a commendable and proper feeling, and it seems to me natural that we should cherish affection for what has brought about in us the birth of love, and life, and sweetness. Calf-love it may (or may not) have been. It was an awakening to a new world, a developing of dormant senses of enjoyment; it remains a pleasant memory for ever; a sweet echoing refrain to a ballad sung long ago.

I don't suppose Schön-Rohtraut and the page ever got married, or ever dreamt of it. She became, probably, an empress, gave up rambling in the forest, proclaimed herself an oracle of fashion, and dispensed smiles imperially and

impartially, after a manner befitting her exalted dignity. And he, I fancy, married some fair flaxen-haired doll of a woman, who took care for his creature comforts, was a good mother to his children, loved him in sleepy sort, and for whom he had a very great regard—though it was not very passionate—and they retired to their dull castle in the country, and exchanged visits with the county families, and took a nap after dinner, and lived generally a comfortable, commonplace life—like the generality of man and womankind. And the page was, I daresay, envied of many as a lucky dog, though, God wot, he knew that the best of his luck, the flower and romance of his somewhat too comfortable life, lay in the memory that he had kissed Schön-Rohtraut's rosy lips, and all the leaves of the forest knew.

When he went to court, and bent the knee in homage before that serene, stately empress, did her eyes tell no tales, I wonder?





Drawn by W. Rice Buckman.]

COSTUME.

WOMEN AS THEY WERE.

BY GERALD WILLIAMS.

'THERE is not so variable a thing in nature as a lady's head-dress. Within my own memory, I have known it rise and fall above thirty degrees. About ten years ago it shot up to a very great height, insomuch that the female part of our species were much taller than the men. The women were of such enormous stature that we appeared as grasshoppers before them.'

Thus wrote Joseph Addison, graceful essayist and genial companion, a hundred and sixty years ago. That fashion repeats itself in costume is an historical fact; and although the gentle sex has not disfigured itself with steeple-hats for some centuries in cities and towns, traces of this eccentric fashion are still to be met with among the peasants of Normandy, who to this day wear head-dresses resembling that displayed in our engraving.

These steeple-hats were made of material corresponding to the station in life of the wearer. A Court lady would wear either velvet or light silk or embroidered work, a burgher's wife black cloth. They were generally surrounded by a veil of some light texture, such as gauze, which was worn sufficiently long to reach to the ground. 'These old-fashioned fontanges,' says Addison's M. Paradin, 'rose an ell above the head, were pointed like steeples, and had long pieces of crape fastened to the tops of them, which were curiously fringed, and hung down their backs like streamers.'

'The women might possibly

have carried this Gothic building much higher,' Addison tells us, 'had not a famous monk, Thomas Conecte by name, attacked it with great zeal and resolution. This holy man travelled from place to place to preach down this monstrous commode, and succeeded so well in it that, as the magicians sacrificed their books to the flames upon the preaching of an apostle, many of the women threw down their head-dresses in the middle of the sermon, and made a bonfire of them within sight of the pulpit. He was so renowned as well for the sanctity of his life as his manner of preaching that he had often a congregation of twenty thousand people; the men placing themselves on the one side of his pulpit, and the women on the other, that they appeared (to use the similitude of an ingenious writer) like a forest of cedars with their heads reaching to the clouds. He so warmed and animated the people against this monstrous ornament that it lay under a kind of persecution, and, whenever it appeared in public, was pelted down by the rabble, who flung stones at the persons that wore it. But notwithstanding this prodigy vanished while the preacher was among them, it began to appear some months after his departure; or, to tell it in Monsieur Paradin's own words, "The women that, like snails in a fright, had drawn in their horns, shot them out again as soon as the danger was over." This extravagance of the women's head-dresses in that age is taken notice of by M. d'Argentre in his "History of Bre-

tagne," and by other historians, as well as the person I have here quoted.'

A pretty, pensive face, down-cast eyes, and lips just breaking into a smile, are elements of beauty that have been commonly met with for centuries between Berwick and the Land's End; but the structure that surmounts that pretty face, the steeple-cap, denotes a certain period in the history of our country: the days when York and Lancaster were at deadly feud; when the fiery Margaret was by turn begging, scheming, and fighting for her captive husband; when the greatest and the last of the feudal barons held half England in subjection; when party strife penetrated into families; when brother crossed swords with brother; when the fields of England were fertilizing with her richest blood, and the king was prisoner in the Tower: to the days of tournaments and archery, bull-baiting and bear-dancing, troubadours and sorcerers: to England of the fifteenth century, under the merry and voluptuous Edward IV.

You are a stranger to London, fair lady, you say; let me conduct you through the suburbs and the city as far as the king's palace at the Tower. You must be careful of your palfrey; the roads are bad and full of holes. To your right is the river Thames, brilliant with barges and gay dresses. Those spires on your left belong to the abbey of Westminster; that gloomy tower close by is the Sanctuary. Further on you see, to the right, on the river-bank, York House, where the archbishops of York reside; we arrive presently at the little hamlet of Charing, behind which you can see the park and chase of Marybone, and still farther off the two hills of Hampstead and

Highgate, green and wooded. Leaving Charing behind, and proceeding eastward, we pass along the Strand, lordly houses on our right, fields on our left. Those grim ruins you see on the right overlooking the river were once the Savoy Palace, which was destroyed in the riot of Wat Tyler; this bridge we are crossing is called the Strand Bridge; now we come to the Temple, and that curious-looking gate is called Temple Bar. In this, Fleet Street, many of our greatest nobles reside; the bridge that we are crossing spans the river Fleet; the gate on the top of yonder hill opens into the city, and is called Ludgate. Now we are in the city. That great building in front is Paul's Church. This crowded thoroughfare is the Cheape, the abode of our wealthy merchants. The tumult is deafening; the 'prentices are loud of voice and sharp of tongue; they are bright, hardy lads withal, and as ready with the bow and quarter-staff as with jest and repartee. This narrow defile is Bucklersbury, these winding streets the seat of trade and the abode of staunch citizens. Now we are approaching our journey's end. That open space in front is Tower Hill, and that imposing pile of walls and turrets is the Tower of London—palace, prison, and fortress.

The times of which we write are pregnant with change. Men and things are in a state of transition. The age of chivalry is fast decaying, the feudal system is nearly dead, and there is springing up between baron and villain that great section of English nationality, the middle class of burgher and trader, anxious for peace and order, the foundation of civilization and personal liberty. The feudal nobility which had for years been at variance with the

Crown has been destroyed in the Wars of the Roses, and the citizens are rising where the nobles fell.

Young ladies of the time of Edward IV. were brought up with greater strictness than their descendants under Victoria. Mammies in those days kept their daughters a greater part of the day at hard work, exacted almost slavish deference from them, and even, as an able antiquarian states, counted upon their earnings. After they had attained a certain age, it was the custom for the young of both sexes to be sent to the houses of powerful nobles to finish their education by learning manners, and thus a noble lady was often surrounded by a bevy of fair faces from the owners of which she did not scruple to receive payment for their living.

Let us follow a lady of gentle blood through her occupations of a day. She rises early—at seven or half-past—listens to matins, and then dresses; breakfast follows; and this is her costume: a silk gown richly embroidered with fur, open from the neck to the waist in front, and having a turn-over collar of a darker colour; a broad girdle with a rich gold clasp; skirts so long as to oblige the wearer to carry them over the arm; shoes long and pointed; a gold chain round the neck; and, to crown all, the steeple-cap, with its pendant gossamer veil. After regaling herself with boiled beef and beer she will, possibly, if religiously inclined, go to chapel; if not, to the garden, and weave garlands. This occupation, enlivened by gossip with her friends, will take her until noon, when dinner is served, after which an hour or so will be spent with the distaff or the spinning-wheel. At six o'clock supper is served, after

which, perhaps, follow games at cards or dice, or, possibly, a dance. Of the latter our young lady is extremely fond, and has been known once or twice, when agreeable company was in the house, to commence dancing after dinner and to continue until supper, when, after a short respite, she began again. She has grown tired of the old carole, and now dotes upon those merry jigs imported from France. Later on, another meal is served, called the *rere-supper*, or banquet, after which she may drink a glass of warmed ale or a cup of wine, if she be so inclined, and then retire for the night. Another day, in the proper season, she may go a-hawking, or ride on horseback, or hunt the stag, or shoot rabbits with bow and arrows, or witness bear-baiting, or some other such refined amusement.

Young ladies of this age are cautioned by a M. de Montaignon, who appears to have been somewhat of a poet and a social reformer, against being too quick to fall in love, from talking scandal, from drinking too much wine, and from chattering at table. They are enjoined to practise habits of industry, to respect the aged, to refrain from quarrels, and, above all, never to allow gentlemen to kiss them *in secret*!

The next most striking period in the history of female costume is the reign of good Queen Bees, during which epoch extravagance in dress may be said to have reached its height. Before the Virgin Queen came to the throne she was remarkably simple in her attire and amusements; for, although her father left her jewels and sumptuous dresses galore, she not only never arrayed herself in them, but only once saw them, and that once, we are informed, sorely against her will. In scho-



FIRST OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

[See p. 413.]



SECOND OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY. [See p. 414.]

larship and learning she took delight, and was constantly busy with needlework.

'Yet howsoever sorrow came or went

She made the needle her companion still;

And in that exercise her time she spent,
As many living yet do know her skill.'

In later days she changed, and historians remind us of her eighty wigs of various colours and of her three thousand dresses! A gaily attired queen made an extravagant court, and sumptuous magnificence in dress is the characteristic of her reign. A court lady wore a low dress with a long stomacher, an immense ruff round her neck, a small hat, a fardingale, or crinoline, a large fan of ostrich feathers with a mirror attached, highly-scented gloves, and frequently a velvet mask. Her feet were shod with pumps of scented Spanish leather, her hair was dyed red in imitation of the royal locks, and her face was painted and rouged. To supply the great demand for wigs, women were sent round the country to buy up country girls' tresses, and female thieves in London constantly decoyed children into dark corners and robbed them of their hair: the dead were frequently spoiled for the same purpose.

Of all curiosities in costume, the ruff, perhaps, is the most eccentric. These monstrosities were frequently made a quarter of a yard deep, so that the wearer was obliged to eat with a spoon a couple of feet long, and were of different colours, yellow being for a long time the fashionable tint. Philip Stubbes, a Puritan, and the satirist of his time, in his '*Anatomie of Abuses*,' in vain endeavoured to write down these fashionable collars. This is what he says:

'The women there use great

ruffles and neckerchers of holland lawn, cambric, and such cloth, as the greatest thread shall not be so big as the least hair that is; and, lest they should fall down, they are smeared and starched in the devil's liquor—I mean starch—after that dried with great diligence, streaked, patted, and rubbed very nicely, and so applied to their goodly necks, and, withal, underpropped with supportasses, the stately arches of pride; beyond all this they have a further fetch, nothing inferior to the rest, as, namely, three or four degrees of minor ruffles, placed *gradatim*, one beneath the other, and all under the master devil-ruff; the skirts, then, of these great ruffles are long and side every way pleated, and crested full curiously, God wot. Then, last of all, they are either clogged with gold, silver, or silk lace of stately price, wrought all over with needlework, speckeled and sparkled here and there with the sun, the moon, the stars, and many other antiques strange to behold. Some are wrought with open work down to the midst of the ruff, and further, some with close work, some with purled lace so cloied, and other gewgaws so pestered, as the ruff is the least part of itself. Sometimes they are pinned up to their ears, sometimes they are suffered to hang over their shoulders, like windmill sails fluttering in the wind; and thus every one pleaseth herself in her foolish devices.'

Although yellow was the fashionable colour for the ruff, other tints were also used, and ladies constantly appeared with ruffs tinged with blue or red or purple starch. The introducer of the popular colour into England was a Mistress Anne Turner, who has achieved some degree of notoriety as having been the accomplice of

the Countess of Somerset in the murder of Sir Thomas Overbury. When the fashionable starcher was brought to trial and condemned to death, Sir Edward Coke, who tried the case, sentenced her to be hanged at Tyburn in a ruff stiffened with her own yellow starch. A contemporary writer (Howell) states that the sentence was carried out to the letter, and that Mistress Turner was hanged wearing a ruff stiffened with the compound she had invented. One Michael Sparke, who wrote in 1651, referring to this, expresses a wish that the judges of his day would sentence female offenders to be hanged with naked bosoms and backs, as it might discourage the general practice of ladies going about only half clad. After Anne Turner's execution yellow starched ruffs ceased to be worn.

That they were at one time much admired is a fact constantly appearing in the plays of the time. In 'The Blind Lady,' Peter says to the chambermaid, 'You had once better opinions of me, though now you wash every day your best handkerchief with yellow starch and your lace quoin.' Again, in the play of 'Albuzmazer,' a lady asks a gentleman, 'What price bears wheat and saffron, that your band is so stiff and yellow?' Stow also remarks that when these ruffs came into fashion the Dutch merchants only sold the lawn and cambric by ells, yards, half ells, and half yards; for there was not then one shopkeeper amongst forty durst buy a whole piece either of lawn or cambric; and at that time there was not so much lawn and cambric to be had in all the merchant houses in London as at this day may easily be purchased at one linendraper's shop.

In the days of the Virgin Queen

umbrellas had not come into fashion, so when a shower did come down in April fair ladies suffered terribly as regarded their ruffs. Stubbes chuckles over their miseries, and tells us: 'But if Æolus with his blasts, or Neptune with his storms, chauce to hit upon the crasie barke of their bruised ruffles, then they goe *flip flap* in the winde, like ragges that flew abroad, lying upon their shoulders like the dishcloute of a slut.'

In the third year of Elizabeth's reign, lawn and cambric came over from Holland and into fashion in England; first of all in small quantities until the Queen took notice of the fabrics, and began to wear ruffs made of the material. The fashion was not adopted without some difficulty, for as every one had worn fine Holland, no laundress could be found who was able to starch and stiffen cambric. At length Elizabeth sent over to Holland for starchers, and the first person who held the post of starcher in ordinary to Her Majesty was one Mistress Guilian, wife to the Queen's head coachman. In the year 1564, however, one Mistress Dingen Vanden Plasse arrived in London from Flanders and announced herself as a professor of the art of starching. The *artiste* was of good parentage, and all the Dutch ladies in London patronised her. In time the beauties of the Court, noticing the neatness and nicety of the Dutch ladies' linen, employed Mistress Plasse also, and subsequently sent their daughters and kinswomen to the professor to be taught the art. The fee was four or five pounds, with an extra charge of twenty shillings for initiation into the mysteries of seething the compound. Mistress Dingen Plasse was the first teacher of starching in England.

Stubbes tells a story *à propos*, of ruffs and starch in all good faith, which we give, not however in his words.

A young lady, daughter of a rich merchant of Antwerp, was invited to the wedding of one of her friends. Our heroine was lovely, but she resolved that art should not be wanting to enhance, if possible, her natural charms. The eventful morning came; her hair was curled and frizzled, her fair face was coloured with waters and ointments, her toilet was spread with—

‘Gloves, pinnes, combes, glasses unspotted,
Pomanders, hooks, and laces unknotted,
Brooches, rings, and all manner of beads,
Laces round and flat for womans’ heads,’

and her tiring woman handed her ruff. But alas for human resolves! That important feature in her costume was limp, limp as linen. In vain did the lady fix and fashion the wire-fencing as a support; to no purpose did she summon her laundress for more starch; no amount of twisting or curling would give the obstinate ruff the desired appearance. Then, and not till then, did our mortified heroine lose her temper; she was not a damsel to do anything by halves, and she swore and blasphemed terribly, trampling the ruff under her feet, and wishing the devil might take her if she ever wore such collars again. Her passion spent, she lapsed into tears, and whilst in this interesting position there entered the room a youth, handsome as Adonis, who tenderly approached her, told her that he had her parents’ consent to address her, and inquired the cause of her sorrow. She told him, and the youth with a heavenly smile, picked up the ruff, and in a trice arranged it to her complete satisfaction. On looking into her mirror she was over-

joyed, and feeling a sudden affection for her unknown valet, fell into his arms and kissed him. A clap of thunder, a smell of sulphur, and the devil appeared in his proper shape, carelessly broke her neck, and vanished into blue smoke. The sorrowing parents proceeded with her obsequies, and four men endeavoured to raise the coffin that contained her from the ground, but in vain; then six tried, with no better result, whereupon the lid of the coffin was removed. Judge the horror of the spectators when they perceived, instead of the body of the unfortunate deceased, an immense black cat, lean and hump-backed, busily engaged in starching a monstrous ruff!

The following verses from the ballad of ‘Greensleaves,’ a popular song of the day, contain a fair detail of a lady’s costume at this period:

‘I bought thee petticoats of the best,
The cloth so fine as fine might be:
I gave thee jewels for thy chest;
And all this cost I spent on thee.
Greensleaves was all my joy;
Greensleaves was my delight;
Greensleaves was my hart of gold;
And who but my lady Greensleaves?

‘Thy smock of silk so faire and white,
With gold embroidered gorgeously;
Thy petticoat of sendall right;
And this I bought thee gladly.
Greensleaves, etc.

‘Thy girdle of gold so red,
With pearls bedecked sumptuously,
The like no other lasses had:
And yet thou would’st not love me!
Greensleaves, etc.

‘Thy purse, and eke thy gallant gilt knives,
Thy pin-case, gallant to the eye;
No better wore the burgers’ wives:
And yet thou would’st not love me!
Greensleaves, etc.

‘Thy crimson stockings all of silk,
With gold all wrought above the knee;
Thy pumps as white as was the milk:
And yet thou would’st not love me!
Greensleaves, etc.

'Thy gown was of the grassy green,
Thy sleeves of satin hanging by;
Which made thee be our harvest queen:
And yet thou would'st not love me!
Greensleaves, etc.'

The word *sendall*, which occurs in the second of the verses quoted, was a kind of thin silk; in the fourth verse, the custom for a lady to carry a purse and a knife is referred to. From the earliest times a purse was worn at the girdle, and in the sixteenth century small and costly daggers were carried in jewelled sheaths which were attached to the girdle by a small band or chain. Shakespear reminds us of the custom, when Juliet, before she drinks the contents of the phial, says:—

'What if this mixture do not work at all?
Must I of force be married to the county?
No—No—this shall forbid it;—lie thou there.'

And she draws her dagger, and lays it down beside her.

Fashion at the Court of Henri IV. of France presented another eccentricity in the way of collars. The ruff, which had gone out of fashion some years previous to the date of which we are now speaking, was succeeded by this fan-like collar, or, as it was called at the time, the *collaso monté*. The daughters of those ladies who flaunted in ruffs a quarter of a yard deep, now flirted in collars a quarter of a yard high, for we are assured that the *collaso* rose frequently as high as the top of the head. Frequently, as we see in the engraving, the edges were fringed and ornamented with lace; the texture was gauze, which was stiffened and thickly plaited. If the fair one pleased, fashion would allow her to turn the *collaso* down over the back of her dress, a practice which afterwards became the habit in the following reign, when every lady wore what is called the Van Dyke collar.

There is a good account of French manners and customs of this time, written by Peter Haylin, D.D., who made a journey through France about 1625 or thereabouts; and, like a good many travellers of the present day, wrote a book on his return to England for the perpetuation of his name and the good of his pocket. The reverend doctor is hard upon the ladies whom he met, and will not allow that they possess beauty, except in their hands, which he tells us were long, white, and slender. Their hair was usually black, and, adds the traveller, somewhat blacker than a gracious loveliness would admit. Then he goes on to tell us that you cannot gather a better character of a Frenchwoman than from her prating, which is tedious and infinite, that you shall sooner want ears than she tongue. 'A dame of Paris,' continues the doctor, 'came in a coach with us from Rouen; fourteen hours we were together, of which time (I'll take my oath upon it) her tongue pelted away eleven hours and fifty-seven minutes. Such everlasting talkers are they all, that they will sooner want breath than words, and they are never silent but in the grave, which may also be doubted.'

As the ladies were endless in their talk, so they were careless whose ears they wearied with their chatter. In an hour or two a Frenchwoman, aye, and a Frenchman, would tell you all the secrets of their lives; the married women were given to pleasure and enjoyment, and fond of singing loose songs, in regard to which the doctor is again surprised.

'Being a people thus prone to sudden familiarity, and so prodigal of their tongues and company, you would scarce imagine them to be coy of their lips; yet

this is their humour. It seemed to me at first strange and uncivil that a woman should turn away from the proffer of a salutation. Afterwards I liked the custom very well, and I had good cause for it; for it saved me from many an unsavoury piece of mannerliness. This, notwithstanding, could not but amaze me, that they who in their actions were so light and wanton, should yet think themselves modest, and confine all lasciviousness unto a kiss.'

On his way through the country he witnessed a wedding at Pontoise; he thus describes it: 'I return again to Frenchwomen, and though I may not kiss them (which he that seeth them will have good cause to thank God for), yet they are at liberty to be courted; an office which they admit freely, and return as liberally; an office to which they are so used, that they can hardly distinguish complement from wooing, till the priest expecteth them at the church-door: that day they set themselves forth with all variety of riches their credit can extend to. At my being at Pontoise I saw the bride return from the church; the day before she had been somewhat of the condition of a kitchen wench, but now so tricked up with scarves, rings, and cross garters, that you never saw a Whitson lady better rigged: I should much have applauded the fellow's fortunes, if he could have married the clothes; but (God be merciful to him) he is chained to the wench: much joy may they have together, most peerless couple. The match was well knit up among them. I would have a Frenchman marry none but a Frenchwoman.'

Who is not familiar with the thick curling hair, the low body, and the turn-over collar represented in our second drawing? As long as the galleries at Hampton

Court are visited by eager sight-seers, and Sir Peter Lely's paintings are the admiration of artists and excursionists, no one is likely to forget the costume of one of the beauties of the Court of Charles II. The merrie monarch of a merrie isle not only surrounded himself with as many beauties whose ready compliance to their sovereign's will was second only to their loveliness, but has immortalized their charms on canvas to be handed down to posterity as a monument of the kingly example he showed his people.

A court lady's life was a round of amusement and dissipation. In the morning she would drink her cup of chocolate in her bed-room, and receive her visitors. She would not always rise from her couch to go through the ceremony, but with a dainty cap set upon her head, and leaning on her elbow, would receive the homage of her adorers, listen to the recital of a few verses by a starving poet, or discuss the latest scandal with perfect simplicity and decorum. In the summer a water-party might follow—in those days pic-nics commenced early in the day—and seated in a gaily decorated barge, music playing and streamers flying, surrounded by richly-dressed beaux, our beauty might journey as far as Chelsea, then a pretty country village, or drop down quietly with the tide to Greenwich and frolic amongst the deer 'under the greenwood tree.' The theatres would be open later on, and my lady would show herself to the *beau monde* from a private box. But the most fashionable spots which beaux and belles delighted to honour with their presence were the Park and Spring Gardens. To promenade the Park in the evening was considered the 'mode,' and many sequestered spots therein became

celebrated for gallantry and duelling. Barn Elms, near its south-west corner, was a well-known rendezvous, and Rosamond's Pond, surrounded as it was with trees, was notorious as a lover's haunt as well as for the place where many disappointed ladies committed suicide. On the spot where Buckingham Palace now stands were the famous Mulberry Gardens which subsequently usurped the place of Spring Gardens. In many of the comedies of the day mention is made of these favourite resorts; in Shadwell's 'Humorist' (1671) we find the following dialogue:—

Frisk. O me, madam! Why does not your ladyship frequent the Mulberry Garden oftener? I vow we had the pleasantest divertisement there last night!

Strick. Ay, I was there, Madam Frisk; and the garden was very full, madam, of gentlemen and ladies that made love together till twelve o'clock at night, the pretty'st: I vow 'twould do one's heart good to see them.

Thes. Why that's a time for cats to make love in, not men and women.'

Young ladies of this day, when concealed by a mask and hood, did not object to converse with any stranger whose manners or appearance pleased them. In the comedy of 'The Pretenders,' Sir Bellamore Blunt is astonished at the gaiety of Lady Ophelia, and the following conversation takes place:—

Sir Bell. Why so? Where are you going, then?

Ophelia. May you be trusted, sir?

Sir Bell. Indeed, I may, madam.

Ophelia. Then know, I'm going to my chamber, to fetch my mask, hood, and scarf, and so jaunt it a little.

Sir Bell. Jaunt it! What's the meaning of that?

Ophelia. Why, that's to take a hackney coach, scour from playhouse to playhouse, till I meet with some young fellow that has power enough to attack me, stock enough to treat and present me, and folly enough to be laughed at for his pains.'

A RECOLLECTION.

SOFT fell the twilight from the summer sky,
 And gray the garden grew ;
 Alone we thought, we wandered—you and I—
 But love went too.

Yet all the while no word of him we spake,
 We talked of trees, flowers, birds ;
 But still his mystic music seemed to shake
 Through all our words.

Through all our talk a tender tremor ran,
 Full low, and soft, and sweet ;
 And when we lightly parted, I began
 To think of it.

Each word of yours I counted even as gold
 A miser gloateth o'er ;
 And twice and thrice the precious sum I told,—
 And then once more.

Each look of yours, the flower you gave to me,
 These were as jewels then :
 Ay, as great jewels ravished from the sea
 For lordly men.

The flower has faded in a book—our talk
 Has faded too, in part—
 But yet I know that in that twilight walk
 I lost my heart.

I dream I wander with you even now ;
 I see the boughs that blend
 Their glorious green o'erhead, and wonder how
 Our walk will end ?

The honeysuckle's scent is in the air,
 It is the twilight hour,—
 I turn and see a face to me more fair
 Than any flower.

And in that face I strive to read my fate,
 And in those wondrous eyes ;
 And trembling in the balance as I wait
 My future lies.

Do you e'er dream of it as well as I ?
 Do you think of it yet ?
 I shall remember it until I die,—
 Shall you forget ?

NEW EXPERIENCES.

ONE of the greatest gifts which a man would desire latest to retain is that of enjoying new experiences. When a man can find nothing new in the world his *raison d'être* almost seems to evaporate. To be able to welcome new friends, new scenes, new discoveries, new thoughts, new truths, new impressions, is a proof that a man is still fresh and young in heart and mind. Physiologists tell us that it is not uncommon that a child of three years old may be absolutely old-aged in respect to the vitality of some bodily organ; and you often meet with young men who are *blasé* and outworn in their youth, and very old men who have absolutely the air and carriage of juvenility, chiefly because they are able to keep their minds fresh, and open to new impressions. I can understand the natural longing of the heart for rest and peace, and even for the *vitai pausa* of Lucretius, but it ought to be for the ultimate object of renewed life and activity. But while the life and activity are ours, albeit maimed and dulled at times, let us be content to move on from phase to phase of vision, of knowledge, of enlightenment—to travel beneath arch after arch of experience. I like a dynamical rather than a statical condition of life, to wear out rather than to rust out. When I talk to men in business, I find that it is mainly their desire to 'make a little pile,' and then go in for ease—eat, drink, and enjoy themselves. Perhaps, also, there are some elements of a nobler ideal; and, indeed, when the mental capacities for enjoyment fail, it is almost a natural law that the corporeal do not linger long afterwards.

Every man gets into his groove

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his engagements fixed, his time mortgaged, his amusements and social intercourse defined for him, his revenues hypothecated—by which sublime phrase we mean an exceedingly simple and obvious matter. But even in a conventional and stereotyped life, every now and then a man contrives to get hold of a new experience. I find that, contrary to my intention, I have begun in a somewhat essayical and didactic style; but I have no intention of moving beyond the range of very homely illustrations. What is very conventional and stereotyped to one man may be a new experience and a very thrilling piece of business to another. I shall show how these may happen, in a very ordinary way, to the most matter-of-fact people. There is, indeed, an early time of life when new experiences come in a throng and with wonderful freshness of their own. The first time when we saw the lessening shores of Albion, and mingled with a people of strange speech; when we first met a famous author; when we first read a great book; when we have first seen the sea, or the Alps, or climbed mountains, or penetrated within caves of the earth; when we have first made some new intellectual acquisition distinctly our own: these are new experiences of a very distinct kind, and our wisdom will be to search and garner up as many of these as we can in life's journey. I hardly mean these, nor yet those new experiences which may more properly be called adventures, and which ordinarily cease with the adventurous period of youth. I have startled off some burglars in the dead of night; I have been run away with by my horse; thrown out of a carriage; nearly drowned in

the Rhine; gone down to the bottom of a mine, and been shot out of the basket like so much coal; got among the Jews; got among the Jesuits; dived deep into the East End; have gone into prisons, factories, public-houses, workshops; have had escapades, adventures, touches of romance. Such things happen to all young men, when Plaucus is Consul, and the colours die off them in process of years, leaving, it is to be hoped, perhaps only two general impressions — first, that every phase of life has a real human interest; and, secondly, that there are lessons of toleration and love for all mankind.

But beyond this, things come in your way which may be nothing to other people but are thoroughly new experiences to you. It seems so very easy and commonplace, and yet you are really shutting your eyes and plunging into unknown waters. A friend takes it into his head to offer himself for a constituency, and you are expected to prove the warmth of your regard by the vigour of your canvassing. It is a very curious piece of work this canvassing. I am afraid that it is hardly likely very greatly to improve your impressions of our masters, the democracy, or even to give you any decided bias in favour of a ballot Act. As a rule, the voter does not take a broad general view—he goes off on some side or class issue. It is rather hard lines, when you have laid yourself out to convince some intelligent mechanic, and have talked yourself hoarse for an hour, to find that the intelligent mechanic tells you frankly that it is his intention to vote with the 'Reds,' whereas all your own sympathies are intensely 'Ultramarine.' Neither is it very satisfactory to find that the real reason is hardly a political one, but that all his pals intend to vote that way. But this is nothing at all to having

to take the chair, or make a speech, at an excited political meeting. Ordinarily speaking, to take the chair is a very dull and decorous proceeding. Indeed, I recollect having to take the chair once when a very learned man was delivering a lecture on the 'Physiognomy and Expression of Egyptian Mummies,' or something equally erudite and obscure. Those Johnsonian sentences lulled me into Elysian repose; and when I was awake by the cessation of the lecturer's voice, and arose to say, in stereotyped phrase, that I was 'sure we had all listened with great attention to the eloquent and instructive lecture,' I was hardly surprised to see a somewhat satirical smile play over the features of my friends on the platform. I found, however, that all this was rosewater compared to what realities might be. I was once in an immense town with a vast population of Irishry, where I and my friends were decidedly of the unpopular colour. It was an immense hall that held several thousand people, and I was smuggled into a little room by a side-door. There I heard screeching and yelling, and other vociferations, compared with which the noises of a menagerie, just before feeding-time, were as the dulcet tones of nightingales. Presently I was let loose upon a crammed and excited audience. A friend considerably informed me that many of the roughs had brickbats with them, and that it was confidently expected that the gas would be turned off, the windows broken, and there would be a general shindy. They yelled their hearts out, like so many lunatic terriers, and I was permitted to proceed during their intervals of exhaustion. The peculiarity of this mob was, that I was permitted to stagger through my speech by the slow rate of progression of a sentence

by a time. Whenever I had made the sense of a sentence complete, I was encountered by a chorus of yelling and execration, by which my audience sought to evince their general disgust at my sentiments. This, at least, gave me the opportunity of collecting my thoughts, which were a little confused by the violence of my reception. At last, that stormy evening came to a conclusion, and I had the dubious honour of being escorted into a safe street by a *posse* of policemen. I came off scot-free, and I expect I am indebted to some ladies who occupied a gallery above the platform, whose soft eyes rained influence, and who, though they might not be of my colours, yet accorded me their protection: so unlike the Latin ladies of yore who would have turned down the thumb.

Once I was asked to become the examiner of a large school. I accepted, with the same alacrity with which Lord Russell would have taken the command of the Channel fleet. To decline would be to throw contempt on my education. There were nearly a hundred boys, and, in academic cap and gown, I was to examine the whole lot of them. My instructions were to take plenty of time, to examine thoroughly, and to make a report of rigorous exactness. It was a private school; and in these days, when private schools are overshadowed by public schools, it may be a comfort to some to mention that, on all hands, the examination was intended to be as thorough and sincere as could be. But it was an affair of an uncomfortable sort, causing a good deal of perturbation 'all round.' The parents wanted to know how the young hopefuls were getting on. The young hopefuls were clamorous for prizes; and, indeed, it was a very pleasing feature of the school—in fact, the only bit of humbug that belonged to it—that

no deserving boy was allowed to go without one. The head-master was in a 'state,' for the repute and connection of his school were in a critical state. The under-masters and ushers were nervous, for on my report depended their peace of mind and even their situations. But perhaps the most anxious and bothered individual of all was the Examiner. I certainly considered that this new experience was of a somewhat painful kind. In the first place, six hours' work straight off, with only an interval for luncheon, was rather a strain. There were papers, little essays written by opinionated little boys, to be looked over at one's leisure. They were rather amusing at first, but became a 'grind' afterwards. Then it was necessary to be very civil to these little boys, and to go into the cricket-field, at the imminent risk of having one's hat or head knocked off by a ball, to show that I wasn't proud and wanted to encourage them. I am sure that none of those little boys had worked half so hard at their irregular verbs as I had done. Many of them were preternaturally sharp, and quite took the wind out of my sails by their extreme readiness to correct mistakes, and volunteer information. When the examination was over all the bonds of discipline were relaxed, and the school, as a school, subsided into the liveliest dissipation. It appears to me that the 'break-ups' of private schools are, more or less, characterised by abundant eating and drinking. The tall lads, who had trembled for my fiat, were now calling for champagne-cup, and as they passed me, with showy-looking girls hanging on their arms, vouchsafed me a good-natured nod. *O tempora! O mores!*

Writing a leading article for a daily newspaper is a new kind of sensation. It was one of the Moral

Indignation order. I was calling on my charming friend Madame de Lattre, whom I found in a high state of disgust at the ways of mankind. She does not like smoke, and she had been fairly smoked out of Rotten Row. An Exalted Personage had thought fit to smoke in the Row, and many small people apparently thought that if smoking a cigar would exalt them, they would not neglect that simple method. Madame, *mon ami*, thought there were several points about the Parks that required to be ventilated and discussed. I mentioned this to Jorkins as we dined at the club. Jorkins is a literary man who affects the journalistic line. What may be the exact nature of Jorkins' contributions to the periodical press I have never yet been able exactly to discover, but he seems to be deep in all editorial ways. 'It is not at all a bad subject, the Parks,' said Jorkins—up to the dodges—tell people what they know already, which is always a good thing. 'If you like to write a leader about it, I think my friend the editor of the "Daily Tomahawk" will take it. I will pick you up in the writing-room at ten o'clock, and we will take a hansom.' The financial arrangement, though not so grand as some people might think, seemed so good for the couple of hours that would be wanted, that I thought that it might henceforth be worth while to write leaders from morning to night. Jorkins, however, told me that to write leaders as a vocation was the most trying kind of literary work; that men became 'hatchety' in face and aged generally; that the average of life was low, and life itself hardly worth the having. Amid such discourse, we got near Temple Bar. We turned up a side-street, dark, still, empty. Then we came to an open door, and proceeding a few steps, were challenged by a

doorkeeper, who was appeased as soon as he saw my friend. It seemed so odd suddenly to come out of the stillness and darkness into this scene of crowded life and animation. There were people rushing about, the whirr of machinery, the delightful smell of fresh paper and ink—everything as bright and active as at high noon. We went up by a wooden spiral staircase, and then through a labyrinth of rooms to a quiet study. Here a very pleasant gentlemanly man was stretching his legs on the hearth-rug. He gave a friendly nod to Jorkins. 'People,' quoth Jorkins, 'are talking a good deal just now about some little matter connected with the Park; and I suggested to my friend that he should do a little social article.' 'Let me look at it,' said the great man. 'I expect I have got just five minutes to spare,' and he laid his watch on the table. The watch ticked in silence, and, before the five minutes were up, he nodded approval, and said he 'would pass it on.' He went very keenly and pleasantly into various chat, though once or twice little bells tinkled, and boys came in with copy and telegraph messages. Then, in a slightly autocratic way, he wished us good-night, and we were once more out in the darkness. You may depend upon it that I had a very early copy of the 'Daily Tomahawk' next day. There was no leader of mine there; and in fact several days elapsed before it appeared. And even then it was shorn of its fair proportions. That neat paragraph in which I had concisely glanced at the history of the Parks, from the earliest recorded times, had suffered considerable excision; and that burning peroration, in which I dwelt on the contrasts of day and night, had disappeared altogether. Nevertheless I considered myself one of the

formers of public opinion; and even the cabman dozing on his box, over what I thought might be my 'leader,' became to me an object of intellectual interest. For a day or two I positively moved about in the elation of a great secret. A mysterious confidence was established between me and Jorkins, although he did not repeat his invitation to the editorial den. I thought of "Single-speech Hamilton," and Bishop Berkeley of the single poem, I am the celebrated single-leader individual.

The other day I was asked to a ball. Now, I am not a dancing man, and never was at any time. I have studied, very feebly, mathematics at Cambridge, and I expect my dancing would more nearly resemble mathematical diagrams than any other figure. I don't see the object of being a wallflower, with an ultimate view to the supper-table. But the invitation was given to me by the physician of a lunatic asylum, and I was to meet the very numerous patients of a county institution. I found my way to the ball-room a little time after dancing had commenced. My friendly physician told me not to be nervous; and perhaps it was rather nervous to be one of half-a-dozen sane people among nearly a hundred lunatics. My first sensation was one of positive unhappiness and depression. It was exceedingly melancholy to see such an amount of human suffering concentrated in a single room. As one contrasted the looks of the physicians and attendants with those of the sufferers, the infinite greatness and grandeur of the prerogative of reason was forcibly impressed upon the mind. Then came a feeling of relief in noting how carefully and kindly they were all tended, and how much amusement and interest they were capable of receiving from life. With eager

interest I went into the histories of various cases, and was delighted to find how considerable were the chances of cure in a large proportion of them. Some were there from the intense dread of poverty; some from excessive grief on account of the deaths of friends or relations; some from love, some from religion. I was rather *épris* with one striking young woman, and was told that she was there from sheer bad temper which had culminated into mental disease. I was told that many who recovered were exceedingly loth to leave the institution, and that many were, doubtless, far better off than they would be in their own homes. I entered very freely into conversation with several of them. Up to a certain point they were sane and rational enough, but their delusions soon began to appear. A pauper told me that his estates were worth five thousand a-year, and begged me to call on a firm of eminent solicitors in Lincoln's Inn, who would see him righted. To me this new experience was something unique.

Once I went to stay with a friend. After a jovial greeting, he explained to me that I was just in time for a burglary! I was a little startled, and hoped that my reverend friend was not interrupting a well-spent life by any practical studies of 'Jack Sheppard.' As he himself admitted, we never know what poor human nature may come to. I waited with some anxiety to know whether I was expected to act as principal or accessory. Once—let me freely confess it—I had acted as accessory to a burglary! Let me recall that novel and unparalleled experience. It was in the old college days. There was a party of us who had been sitting up till the small hours. We had got into a bad way of talking or reading all night, and of not being fit for very much in the

day. We were waiting till the college-gates should open. About four o'clock in the morning we became very hungry—with as good reason as any men could have. The scouts had cleared away all the commons, and we had no stores reserved. At this point a simple but daring conception occurred to one of our party. He was a remarkably quiet man, and owned a great historical name, so that one might legitimately have expected better things of him. He merely suggested that we should commit a burglary! We were all reading for honours, and we knew how much quiet reading men are privileged to do. One man may take a horse, when another is hung for looking over a hedge. Our leader suggested that, by adroit management, not extending beyond the breaking of some bricks and bars, we might have the mastery of the treasures of the college kitchen. The loot was limited to a few steaks; and, as the cook had touched a good deal of our money, we presumed that he would not have any strong objections. I did not myself take share in that glorious exploit, but I confess I participated in the cooking and devouring of those felonious steaks; and I certainly understand the proverb about stolen waters being sweet.

My friend set me at ease, so far as his own morality was concerned, by explaining that he was not himself burglariously disposed—as might have been the case in college days—but that he rather anticipated the pleasure of receiving some burglars at some unknown hour of the night. My friend was the unfortunate possessor of a vast quantity of plate, in a house where such possessions would hardly be looked for. One day a servant was counting out the plate before her mistress, when they suddenly be-

came aware of a gipsy-looking woman staring into the room, apparently fascinated by the sight of so much silver. Within a short period after that memorable morning no less than three attempts at housebreaking had occurred. On one occasion the thieves had been, apparently, unable to effect an entrance; once they had disturbed the house, and once they had been alarmed by the rattle of a policeman. 'They are a persevering lot,' said my friend; 'they will doubtless try again, and I have a strong impression that they will try to-night. They have given us no trouble for the last few days, doubtless to put us off our guard. I really cannot make out why they did not get in the first time they tried. Nothing could be easier. In all probability they will make their entrance by the way of your bedroom-window. You see they get on the top of that wall, then to the roof of the conservatory, then swarm up the spout, to your window-ledge—and there you are! I don't think they'll care to murder us in our beds. You see, they would run a chance—not much of a chance perhaps—of being hung for murder; but they would not be hung for burglary.' My friend then withdrew, having considerably suggested that if a burglar should open a window (which couldn't fasten) I should, as a preliminary step, fling the water-jug at his head. I applied for a night-light, and lay couchant, with the valorous intent of seizing the burglar—if he didn't first seize me—and saving my friend's plate. Sleep stole upon me irresistibly, and in the morning, instead of 'waking up with our throats cut,' the house was still unpillaged. My last view of my friend displayed him conveying his plate to the bank in a four-wheeler.

Then there are other new expe-

riences which, on the whole, cannot be said to have a very cheerful character. There is the first experience of a new, perhaps a critical, illness. I think it is Carlyle who says that a man who has a sound stomach does not know that he has a stomach. But the time comes when an awful revelation is made to him concerning the existence of his viscera. There was a great duke once, a hearty, rollicking, eating, drinking, jovial duke. His idea was the luxury of the table. He had his hotels in town and country, and the landlords would delight to tell him of the wines they had secured from rich vintages, and all the delicacies of heaven and earth for the eating. One day the great duke came to a certain hotel, and the landlord himself waited on him with the bill of fare. Instead of the rich, uproarious voice, there came a faint and feeble quaver from the close carriage: 'Ah! Mr. Landlord, those happy days are all over now. I always carry my dinner with me—a small quantity of boiled chicken.'

The first attack of illness, the first estrangement, or loss, or disappointment, or fall in life comes with a certain rudeness and an undoubted shock. There is a striking saying by a brilliant and gifted man, Dr. Croly, that he was so inured to misfortune that he had almost ceased to care for it. Perhaps there was a tinge of bitterness in the remark that might seem to indicate that up to that point misfortune had not completed its beneficent lessons. It is ordinarily said that a man grows callous, and he does not feel things now as he

would have felt them once. Perhaps the reason is that the man is wiser and better. He takes the arrows and slings of fortune, the aches and pains of flesh and spirit, knowing that these are the conditions on which he holds life. He has a *per contra* in a fair share, and he must not be greedy in such things, of the beauty and blessedness of life. He is not so very greatly moved by the sorrows and misfortunes that may come to himself, or which may even come to him more nearly in coming to others. He learns to take large views, where the scholars have to learn hard lessons which are really meant to be hard, but where the great thing is that they should be learned perfectly. And one must try again and again before anything like perfection is produced. The rule is, never to undertake any new experience until we are pretty sure that we can get through it; and, in the next place, by practice and fortitude to prepare for any new experience that may come upon us—most of all, for the ultimate New Experience that will be ours. I remember a man telling me in Switzerland that he had just climbed the summit of Monte Rosa. I thought that must have been very hard work. Not at all, he said, for he had practised daily; and when he did it at last, it was done with extreme ease. And so our Laureate says that those who climb up their steep ascents with toil of heart and hands,

'Shall find the topmost crags of duty
scaled—

Are close upon the shining table lands
In which our God himself is Moon and
Sun.'

FREDERICK ARNOLD.



'ISOLA SAN LAZZARO.'

I STOOD upon San Lazzar's sacred isle,
 Where Byron sought the vast Armenian tongue,
 Beheld fair Venice rise in pillar'd pile
 From out the silent waters. Fancies throng
 More quickly when the heart is full of song.
 And as I dreamed of all *his* eyes had seen,
 The cypress and fair garden : all the wrong
 His heart endured, unsought, did intervene,
 And I believed him, loved him, though unknown, unseen !

And is it so? Must Time fulfil his song?
 Are all to be forgotten when they die?
 Except by some poor loungers from the throng
 Of vast humanity, who stops to sigh,
 Or shed a tear or two as he goes by
 Upon the tablet of the friend he loved
 More deeply than himself! I know not why,
 But 'tis the fashion, when the soul hath fled,
 To turn the mind away from sorrow—into bed !

But such as he should surely live awhile,
 If but upon the pages lovers read,
 And which old women think are sinful guile,
 While pressing maidens to espouse their creed,
 Until at length the female world is freed
 From that which they so dread, yet dreading, love
 The more, because through all they note the seed
 Of that sweet apple which, in days gone by,
 Show'd its rind of disobedience, not mortality !

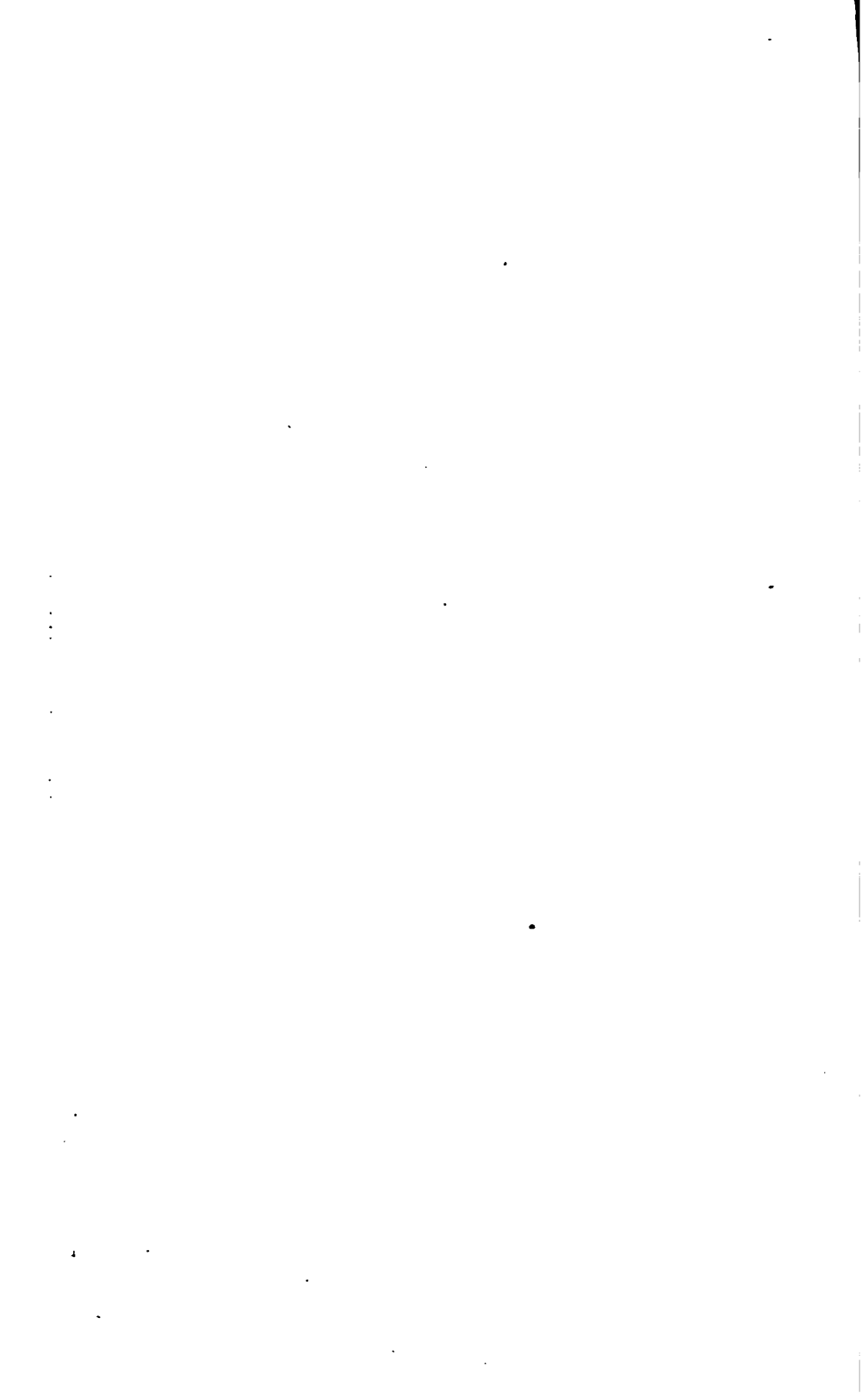
But which, with all its faults, gave pleasure birth,
 And changed the dull monotony of life
 Into short-lived joy—taught man his worth,
 And gave the lonely Adam Eve as wife
 To savour his existence—make it rife
 For what was sure to follow—labour, death !
 A hand to hold his brow when bowed by strife,
 All wafted by that disobedient breath
 Which bent the soul of man, and *cursed* him, Scripture saith !

Enough of this ! my moral points no tale,
 Nor e'en adorns these verses, or my theme :
 Besides, I'm bound to think the subject stale,
 Since it has been, forsooth, more puffed than steam.
 I have some doubts, much graver than they seem
 From outward looks, about that very fruit ;
 The manner it was eaten ! let them pass :
 They may be sinful, and they may not suit,
 And I should only be, like Byron, thought a brute !



Drawn by P. Justyue.]

"ISOLA SAN LAZZARO."



No ass can 'scape the halter or the pad,
 Unless he be a human one ; and then
 He gets one metaphorical, as bad,
 Which makes him useful to his fellow men.
 I've no desire to emulate, or gain
 That credit which to others is most due,
 So I reserve from argument a strain
 Which springs from all that is most good and true,
 And from this island, Byron, will but think of you !

This was thy home ! the trees and flowers breathe
 Through fifty long and weary years thy name !
 And many old associations wreath
 From out this place a garland to thy fame.
 Time here has nothing wrought : there is the same,
 The same old tower in sunlight glistening
 With coroneted summit, from whence came
 In other days the seabird's flashing wing,
 Which swooped across the waters in an airy ring.

There is the selfsame fountain playing yet
 Beneath the sombre, sad, old cypress tree,
 Where often, musing, you have silent sate,
 And ponder'd o'er your sadden'd destiny.
 'Tis in such moments, when the mind is free,
 And silence reigns in its most hallow'd state,
 That we approach the dread eternity,
 And strive to look with calmness on that fate
 Which soon shall link our present with our future state.

To-day I live with other, brighter years !
 When yet you dwelt upon this modest isle,
 And drank, in thought, a cup of bitter tears,
 Your heart too sad, your face too fix'd to smile.
 And as I stand beneath these trees awhile,
 The breath of heav'n wafts me bitter fears,
 And thoughts, which shall not these poor lines defile,
 Speak of those sorrows and heart-broken years
 Behind whose shadow'd arms a horrid spectre leers.

Sing on, pure fountain ! with thy liquid arms,
 For thy weird story hath its charms for me !
 If music, for a prison'd soul hath balms,
 How much the more so when the soul is free !
 But tell me, in *thy* language, where is he
 For whom my inward soul tempestuous yearns ?
 Hath he found solace in eternity ?
 Or is he in that region Heaven spurns,
 And where the poor immortal soul in writhing burns ?

Is he forsaken both by God and man ?
 Hurl'd unforgiven to a dæmon king,

Because he finished what the world began,
And taught an earless multitude to sing !
Oh ! say, is there no mercy 'neath the wing
Of ministering angel, whose vast span
Of duty, lies not 'twixt the priest and king,
But stretches further than poor fancy can
Depict, and lies with ev'ry grade of thinking man ?

All here is silent, save the bubbling rill
Of rise and falling water, in the pond
Whose liquid mirror bears *his* image still,
And holds it upward to that world beyond
Where he has journey'd. Oh ! for some great wand
To conjure up the poor dead face at will,
And show me Byron, happy in that land
Of which he used to dream ! to scale that hill
And do that which no living man did yet fulfil !

But such is Fate ! The purest, fairest, best,
Have but the lease of a few shifting years,
And then they cease from labour, sink to rest,
Or glide into oblivion through our tears !
The smile we fondly loved no more appears,
The voice that used to charm us hath confess'd,
And ev'ry waft of memory endears
The wander'd soul we trust that God hath blest
With that pure, holy love, which angels only test.

Farewell, San Lazzaro ! the sun hath set,
And purple blushes stain the western sky,
Which bid me leave thee ! Oh ! with what regret
I linger here to say my last good-bye !
Row on, thou gondolier ! and let me sigh
O'er those sad thoughts this sacred isle has moved.
Alas ! I fear they'll haunt me till I die,
And my poor sadden'd soul hath joined the soul it loved !



SKETCHES FROM PARIS.

III.—'Awakening.'

BERTHE was holding a council about bonnets with her maid and Mademoiselle Augustine when I went in. The complexion of the sky it would seem was a grave complication in the question at issue; it was of a dull leaden colour, for though the heat was intense, the sun was not shining outright, but sulking under a heavy veil of cloud that looked as if it might explode in a thunder-storm before the day was over.

'How étourdie you are, Clarisse!' exclaimed Berthe, impatiently; 'the idea of putting me into gris perle under a sky like that! where are your eyes?'

Clarisse looked out of the window, saw the folly of her ways, and proposed a pink bonnet to relieve the unbecoming sky and the grey costume. The amendment was approved of, so she left the room to fetch the bonnet.

'Elle est bonne fille, cette Clarisse, mais elle a des distractions étonnantes,' remarked Berthe.

Mademoiselle Augustine sighed, smiled, and shrugged her shoulders. 'What will you, Madame la Comtesse? Every one is not born an artist.'

'Every one who is born with eyes in their head can use them,' said Berthe, and she took up the ivory puff on her dressing table, and began very deliberately shaking out delicate clouds of *poudre*, à la violette over her forehead and cheeks.

We were going together to a marriage at St. Roch, and we were to be there at noon precisely, the *faire-part* said; so I had to remind Berthe that if the business of powdering and puffing pro-

ceeded at this rate we might save ourselves the trouble of the drive. With the sudden impulse that carried her so rapidly from one object of interest to another, she dropped the puff, snatched the pink bonnet from Clarisse, put it on hastily, seized her gloves and prayer-book, and we hurried down stairs and were off.

On turning into the Faubourg St. Honoré we found a crowd collected in front of the *mairie*. Berthe pulled the checkstring. 'It's news from the frontier,' she exclaimed, eagerly; 'and if we were to miss the wedding we must hear it.'

She sprang out of the brougham and I after her. The crowd was so deep that we could not get near enough to read the placards, but judging by the exclamations and commentaries that accompanied its perusal by the foremost readers, the news was both exciting and agreeable.

'Fallait pas vous effrayer, mes petites dames,' said a blouse who had seen us alight, and saw by our faces that we were alarmed; 'we've beaten one half the Prussians to a jelly, and driven the rest across the Rhine!'

'The canaille! I always said they would run like rabbits the first taste they got of our chasse-pots!' exclaimed a lad of fourteen, who halted with arms akimbo and a basket of vegetables on his head to hear the news.

'And these are the chaps that marched out of Berlin to the cry of "Nach Paris! Nach Paris!" The beggars! They were glad enough to clean our streets, aye and would have cleaned our boots with their moustaches, and thank-

ful, just to turn a penny that they could not get at home,' returned the first speaker.

'Nach Paris, indeed!' cried the lad with vegetables; 'let them come, let them try it!'

'Let them!' echoed several voices; 'we'll give them a warm welcome!'

'Ay, that we will!' declared a pastrycook from the other end of the *trottoir*; 'we'll treat them well, we'll serve 'em up *aspic à la daionnette*, and *petits pois à la mitrailleuse*, and see how they like it.'

This keen joke was received with hilarity and immense applause, and the pastrycook, his *bonnet de coton* perched on one side, strode off with the air of a man who has done his duty and knows it.

The remarks of the crowd, if not very lucid, were sufficiently conclusive as to the nature of the placard that held it gaping before the *mairie*. The news was clearly good news, so, satisfied with this broad fact, Berthe and I jumped back into the brougham and continued our way to St. Roch. But it seemed as if there were a conspiracy against our getting there. At the entrance to the Rue Royale we were blocked by a troop of recruits marching down from the Boulevards to the Rue de Rivoli. Flags and banners, and bunches of tricoloured ribbons hoisted on sticks floated at intervals above the moving mass, and the stirring chaunt of the Marseillaise kept time to the roll of drums and the broken tramp of undrilled feet. The shops emptied themselves into the street, buyers and sellers rushed out to see the recruits, and greet them with cheers and embraces, while many joined in the chorus and shouted enthusiastically—'Marchons! marchons pour la patrie!' The recruits

every now and then, to the utter detriment of all choral harmony, relieving their pent-up patriotism by hurrahing and Vive la Francing with frantic energy.

'Pauvres diables!' exclaimed a tradesman, who stood near us watching the stream flow past; 'how many among them will ever set eyes on Paris again, I wonder?'

'Ah, indeed!' said his wife, 'but all the same, it's a proud day for them this, whatever may come of it; if our *gamin* were but a few years older he would be stepping with the best of them, and who knows he might come home with a pair of gold epaulets to his coat?'

'Tush, woman!' retorted the man, sharply; 'there is plenty of *chair-d-canon* without him,' and he went back to his shop.

'What a horrible thing war is when one comes to think of it,' said Berthe, turning suddenly round with a flushed face; 'every man going by there is the centre of another life, some, perhaps, of many lives, that will never know happiness again if he be killed. It is a dreadful scourge. Thank God I have no brothers!'

The way was cleared at last, and the carriages were able to move on. The noise and clamour that rose on all sides of us grew louder and wilder as we proceeded, one would have fancied the entire population had been seized with delirium tremens. The news of a victory, coming unexpectedly after the first disasters of the campaign, had elated the popular depression to frenzy, and, as usual with Paris, there was but one bound from the depths of despair to the giddiest heights of exultation. Flags were thrust out of windows and chimney pots, an eruption of tricolour broke out on the houses, as if by magic their blank fronts

were variegated with red, white, and blue. Innumerable *gamins* cropped up from those mysterious regions where *gamins* dwell, and whence, at a moment's notice, they emerge and improve the opportunity; the merry-faced, ragged young vagabonds mustered in force on the macadam, formed themselves into an impromptu procession, and marched along the middle of the street, bawling out the Marseillaise at the tops of their voices; older *gamins* caught the infection and bawled in response, and turned and marched with them. At the corner of the Place Vendôme a citizen, unable to restrain the ardour of his patriotism, stopped a fiacre, and jumped up beside the driver, and bade him stand while he poured out his soul to the *patrie*. The cabman reined in his steed, and stood while the patriot spouted his improvisation, stretching out his arms to the column—the immortal column! and pointing his periods with the talismanic words: *Invincible! Enfants de la France! Terreur de l'ennemi!* and so forth. No speaker in the forum of old Rome ever elicited more inspiriting response from his hearers than the citizen patriot from the motley audience round his cab. Again and again his voice was drowned in vociferous cheers and bravos, and when he was done and about to retire from the rostrum, the cabman, altogether carried away by the emotions of the hour, flung his arms round the orator and pressed him to his heart, and then addressing himself to the assembled citizens, defiantly demanded if their fellow citizen had not deserved well of them, if there was any danger for the *patrie* while she could boast such sons as that! The appeal was rapturously responded to by all, but most notably by an *enfant des*

Vosges, who tossed his *beret* in the air and caught it again, and cried vehemently—

'Prafo! prafo! Fife le pourgeois! fife la padrie!'

If the words had been a shell scattering death amongst the listeners, their effect could not have been more startling. Like lightning the spirit of the crowd was changed; its joy went out like the snuff of a candle; it swayed one moment to and fro, hesitating, then a yell, a hiss, and a scream shot up in quick succession.

'A spy! a traitor! a Prussian! à l'eau! à la lanterne!' and away they flew in hot pursuit of the luckless Alsatian, whose German accent had raised the devil. The orator stood by the column alone in his glory, pelted by the jargon of cries that shot across him on every side from the Boulevards and the many streets running out of the Place: 'Marchons! à l'eau! à Berlin! à la lanterne!' It was like the clash of contending tongues from Babel.

This was our last adventure till we reached St. Roch. As might have been expected we were late, the ceremony was over, and the bride was undergoing congratulations in the sacristy. We elbowed our way through the throng of guests and were in due time admitted to embrace the Marquise de Chassedot, née Hélène de Karodel, and to shake hands with the bridegroom, and sprinkle our compliments in proper proportion over the friends and relations on both sides.

At the wedding breakfast the conversation naturally turned, to the exclusion of all other topics, on the happy event which had brought us all together, but as soon as the bride left the table to change her bridal dress for a travelling one, everybody as if by common consent burst out into

talk about the war, and the news that had thrown the city into such commotion. The cautious incredulity with which the bulletin was discussed contrasted strangely with the tumult of enthusiasm which we had just witnessed outside. It was quite clear no one believed in the 'famous victory;' some one went so far as to declare it was only a blind to hide some more shameful disaster than had yet befallen the troops; others less perverse thought it might be only a highly-coloured statement of a slight success. As to the authorities, it was who would cast the first stone at them; the government *en bloc* was a rotten machine that ought to have been broken up long ago, a crazy old ship that held together while it lay rolling in the port, but must inevitably fall to pieces in the first gale of wind, and go down with all her crew; they were all a bad lot; the only exceptions to the general rule of rottenness were those few officials who happened to be present, and who had been left behind by the stupidity of the captain. But was not this the case from time immemorial? In the downfall of every government we see the same short-sighted jealousy prevail against the interests of the state, men, who might have saved the country, shoved aside by *intrigants*, who sacrifice it to their own base ambitions.

Some allusion was made to the impending siege of Paris, but it was cut short by the irrepressible merriment of the company; the most sober could not speak of such an absurdity without losing their gravity; it was, in fact, a heavy joke worthy of those beer-drinking German braggarts, and no sane Frenchman could speak of it as anything else without being laughed at. As a joke, however,

it was discussed, and gave rise to many minor pleasantries that provoked a good deal of fun. An interesting young mother wished the city might be invested and starved, because it would be so delightful to starve oneself to death for one's baby, to store up one's scanty food for the innocent little darling, and see it grow fat on its mother's *dévouement*. A young girl declared she quite longed for the opportunity of proving her love to her father; the Grecian daughter would be a pale myth compared to her, and the daughter of Paris would go down to posterity as a type of filial duty such as the world had never seen before. The kind and quantity of provisions to be laid in for the contingency gave rise to a vast deal of fun. One young *crevé* hoped his *maitre d'hôtel* would provide a good stock of cigars, he could live on smoke by itself rather than without smoke and with every other sort of nourishment; but it should be unlimited smoke and of the best quality; his sister thought of bringing a sack of chocolate bonbons, and contemplated herself with great satisfaction arrived at her last *prêline*, which she heroically insisted on her brother's accepting, while she embraced him, and, seated on her empty sack, expired of inanition at his feet.

'Do you intend to stay for the tragedy, Madame?' inquired the gentleman who was to live on smoke, addressing himself to Berthe.

'If I believed in the tragedy, certainly not,' she replied, 'but I don't; Paris is not going to be so obliging as to furnish us with an heroic opportunity.'

'Not of the melodramatic sort perhaps,' observed our Austrian friend, with a touch of sarcasm in his habitually serene manner, 'but

those who have any plain prose heroism to dispose of can take it to the ambulances, where it will be thankfully received and gratefully acknowledged. I went yesterday to see a poor fellow who is lying in great agony at Beaujon, his mother and sister are watching him day and night, they dare not try to move him home lest he should die on the way; he lost both arms at Gravelotte. There are plenty more like him, Mesdames, if you wish to offer them your services.'

Berthe shuddered.

'Thank God I have no brothers!' she murmured under her breath.

'What is to be the end of it all?' I said, 'admitting that the siege of Paris is an utter impossibility, half Europe must be overhauled before peace is definitively established?'

'So it will be,' asserted the Austrian coolly; 'wait a little and you will see all the powers trotted out; first Russia will put her finger in the *mêlée*, and then England's turn will come.'

'I hope England will have the sense to keep out of it,' said Berthe, 'she would be sure to get the worst of it, fighting single-handed, as she should do now.'

'That's precisely why Russia will take care that she does not keep out of it,' remarked the Austrian.

'And what would Russia gain by England's being worsted.'

'She would gain the satisfaction of paying off old scores that have rankled in her side these fifteen years. Do you fancy that she has forgotten that little episode in the Crimea, or that she is less bent on revenge because she doesn't blast and blow, and keep her victim on the *qui-vive* by forever threatening to annihilate her, and so forth? Not a bit of it. Russia neither boasts nor

brags, but quietly holds her tongue, and keeps her temper, and bides her time. When she is quite ready, and the day is, perhaps, not so very remote, she will pick a fight with England, and every pope and peasant in holy Russia will light a candle to his holy images, and when the news comes in that England has been thrashed, they will light as many as will illuminate the Urals and the Caucasus.'

'Après?' I said.

'Après what, Madame?'

'When they have thrashed her, what will they do with her?'

'Do with her! Annex her.'

He looked me straight in the face without a smile on his; but I could not believe he was speaking seriously, and I burst out laughing.

'The position of the conquered territory might offer some difficulties in the way of annexation,' I said, presently; 'but we will assume that the obliging Providence of pious King William interferes in behalf of his Muscovite brother, and overcomes all obstacles by land and by sea, and that the doughty little island is constituted a colony of the Czar's dominions, what could he do with it? What earthly use would it be to him?'

'Use!' echoed the Austrian, elevating his eye-brows with a supercilious smile; 'in the first place, he might make it a little succursale to Siberia. There is a whole generation of those unmanageable, half-mad Poles safely walking about this side of Europe, plotting, and dreaming, and rhapsodising; only think what a convenience it would be to their father the Czar, if he had a centre of action so near them! He would catch them like rabbits, and then, instead of hawking them over the world to Nerehintz and Irkoutsk, he could sentence them to perpetual sciatica, or chronic lum-

bago, or a mild term of ten years' rheumatism in the Isle of Fogs, versus, the mines and the knout, and all the rest of the paternal chastisements administered in Siberia. Then, over and above this immense accommodation, he might have his docks in England; he might make the naughty Poles learn of his English subjects how to build ships, till, by-and-by, the navy of holy Russia would be the finest navy in the world, and big, top-heavy Prussia would shake in her shoes, and hot-headed troublesome France would keep quietly on her knees in the mire, and all Europe would bow down before the Czar and swing the incense-pot under his nose. Use, indeed! Let him catch England, and I promise you he'll find plenty of use for her.'

'Yes,' I said, 'just so; let him catch her.'

It was near three when the wedding party broke up, and Berthe and I drove away. We found the excitement abroad still unabated. At the corner of many streets patriots were perorating to animated crowds; tongues innumerable were running up and down the gamut of noise with the most extraordinary variations. There is always something stirring in the sight of a great popular emotion; but in this instance it was more threatening than exhilarating. You felt that it was labelled dangerous, that terrible elements of destruction were seething close under the surface-foam, and that the chattering, and shouting, and good fellowship might, in a flash of lightning, be changed to murderous hate and madness beyond control. It was madness already, but it was a harmless madness so far. Was it nothing more? Was there no method in it, I wondered, as we beheld the people haranguing and

being harangued, rushing and gesticulating, and all showing in their faces and gestures the same feverish excitement. Were they no better than a cityful of apes, chattering and screaming from mere impulse? Was it all quackery and cant without any redeeming note of sacrifice, and truth, and valour, and would all this fiery twaddle die out presently in smoke and dumbness?

We had turned down to the Rue de Richelieu and were coming back, when our attention was arrested by a body of volunteers marching past the Place de la Bourse. They were in spruce new uniforms, and they were singing something that was not the *Marseillaise*, or *La Casquette au père Bugeaud*, or any other of the many chaunts we had been listening to; altogether their appearance and voices roused our curiosity, so Berthe desired the coachman to follow in their wake, that we might find out what troops they were, and what they were singing. They turned up the Rue de la Banque, to the Place des Petits Pères, and there they entered the church of Notre-Dame des Victoires; as many of them as could find room, for they numbered some thousands, and nearly half had to remain outside. The great front doors were thrown open, so that those who were in the place could see all that went on within; the soldiers were on their knees, barheaded, and a venerable old priest was speaking to them; but his voice was so feeble that what he said was audible only to those who were close to the altar. There was no need now to ask who those men were, or whence they came; none but the men of Brittany, the sons of the men who went out to death against the ruthless soldiery of Robespierre to the cry of *Dieu et le Roi!* were likely to walk through

Paris bearing the cross at their head, and making the ex-votos of Notre-Dame des Victoires shake on the walls to the echo of the grand old Vendean hymns; none but the descendants of the men whose 'strength was as the strength of ten, because their hearts were pure,' would dare in these days of sneaking, shame-faced Christianity, to commit such a brazen act of faith. The volunteers were accompanied by a great concourse of people, mostly relations and friends, but they remained outside, leaving the church to the soldiers. It was a strange and beautiful sight to see those brave, proud Bretons kneeling down with the simplicity of little children before the shrine of the Virgin Mother and singing their hymn to the God of Hosts, asking His blessing on themselves and their arms before they went out to battle. When they came out of the church with the curé at their head all the people of a common impulse fell upon their knees in the Place to get his blessing; the men received it with bare heads and in silence, the women weeping, most of them, while some lifted up their hands with the old priest and prayed out loud a blessing on the soldiers. Then he spoke a few words to them, not to the soldiers only, or chiefly, but to all, especially to the women. He bade them remember that they had their post in the national struggle, and that they might be a noble help or a guilty hindrance as they chose. Those who had husbands or brothers or sons in the ranks would understand this without any explanation from him. But there were many amongst them who had no near relations in danger, and who fancied, perhaps, that this exempted them from sharing the common burthen, and that they

were privileged to stand aloof from the general anguish and anxiety. It was a pagan feeling, unworthy of a daughter of France and still more of a Christian. There could be no isolation at a time like this. All should suffer, and all should serve. Those, happily, who had no kindred of their own at the frontier should adopt in spirit the brave fellows who had left none behind, they should care for them and comfort and encourage them from a distance, like true sisters, helping them in the battle-field with their prayers, and in the camp and the hospital by their active and loving ministration; let such among them as were free and fit to do it go and learn of that other sisterhood of the diviner sort how to serve as they do who serve with the strong pure love of charity; let them who could not do this give abundantly where-with the stricken soldier might be healed and comforted on his bed of pain; if they could not give their hands let them give their hearts and their money; let them help by sacrifice; sacrifice of some sort was within the reach of all. He blessed them again at the close of his little exhortation, and then every one got up. The Bretons fell into rank, and, rending the welkin with one loud cry of *Dieu et la France!* marched on to the Northern railway.

Berthe and I had been kneeling with the crowd. 'Let us follow and see the last of them,' she said; and we got into the brougham, and went on at a foot pace.

The scene at the station was one never to be forgotten by those who witnessed it. The pathos of those rough farewells, the lamentations of some of the women, the Maccabean courage of others, the shrill crying of little children, the tears of strong men who felt it like men, but bore it with

the courage of soldiers and the exulting hope of Christians; it was a sight to make one's heart glad to rapture, or sad to despair.

We had no sooner alighted than I lost sight of Berthe—indeed, I had forgotten her. My whole thoughts were absorbed in the scene going on around me. It was only when the bell rang and the soldiers passed out to the *debarcadère*, leaving the space comparatively empty, that I looked about and saw her in the middle of the *trottoir* with her arms round a young girl who was sobbing as if her heart would break. It appeared that she was just a fortnight married to a Breton lad of her own age—nineteen; they had worked hard and saved all their little earnings these five years past in order to get married, and now, just as they were so happy, he had gone away from her, and she would never see him again; he was certain to be killed, because he was so good and loving and clever. Berthe pressed the poor child to her heart, and committed herself to the wildest pledges for the safe return of the young hero; and, finally, after evoking a burst of passionate gratitude and love from the girl, who half believed her to be a beneficent fairy sent on a special mission of comfort to her, Berthe exacted a promise that she was to come and see her the next day, and we set our faces homewards.

We drove on for a little while in silence, looking each out of our separate *portière*, our hearts too full for conversation. I saw by Berthe's eyes that she had been crying, and I felt instinctively that a great struggle was going on within her. My whole heart was vibrating in sympathy with it, but I could not say so. After a few minutes the silence between

us became oppressive, and Berthe, suddenly turning round, exclaimed:

'And I was thanking God that I had no brothers! Blind, selfish fool that I was!'

She burst into tears, and hid her face in her hands, sobbing convulsively. The change in her bright and volatile spirit seemed to make a change in all the world. I could no longer accuse the people, as I had done an hour ago, of being mere puppets dancing to a tune and throwing themselves into attitudes that meant no more than a sick man's raving. No, it was not all cant and tinkle and false echo; there was substance under the symbolizing; there were men amongst them who worshipped God and were proud to proclaim it; there were hearts that seemed dead, but were only sleeping. Paris was dancing in mad mirth like a harlequin to-day, but to-morrow it would be different; to-morrow the smoke and the flame would go out, leaving behind them the elements of a great nation burnt pure of the corroding dross that had choked and held them captive so long.

On arriving at home Berthe found a costume which had just come from M. Grandhomme's laid out on her bed. At any other moment the sight would have claimed her delighted attention, but she turned from it with a feeling of indifference now, almost of disgust.

Clarisse, who had been puzzling over some new trick in the trimming, took it up in a flurry, and was for trying it on at once to see how it fitted, and whether the novelty became her mistress; but Berthe, with a movement of impatience, told her to put it away, that she was in no mood for attending to *bêtises* just then. The girl opened her eyes in astonishment. A costume of Grand-

homme's that cost eleven hundred francs to be called a *bêtise*! It was flat profanity. She left the room with a painful presentiment that something serious was amiss with Madame la Comtesse.

As soon as Berthe was alone she began to think. It was a new experience in her life this process of thinking, and she was hard pressed by it; for it was no vacant reverie that she was indulging in, but a sharp, compulsory review of her past and present existence, and the result was anything but soothing. Her life up to this day had been the life of a butterfly, gay, airy, amusing, very enjoyable to herself, and harmless enough as regarded her fellow-creatures. She had drunk her fill of the good things of life, enjoying herself in every possible way; legitimately; she was incapable of wronging or hurting any one; she was extravagant in her dress and other luxuries, but her fortune allowed this, and she made no debts. So far her life was blameless, and, indeed, if she compared it with many of the lives around her it was a very respectable one. But suddenly her standard was knocked down, and all her comfortable theories collapsed. It turned out that she had a soul somewhere, which she had forgotten all about, while living, as if happily free from that incumbrance, in selfishness and folly that were counted by this newly-revealed standard little short of guilt. It was an unexpected discovery, and a most unpleasant one. That exclamation

which had escaped her twice, at the thought of the great general sorrow, kept ringing in her ears like a warning and a reproach: 'Thank God I have no brothers!' Who, then, were those men whom she had just seen going forth in voluntary self-devotion to fight for her and those who like her could not defend themselves? Was there such a thing in Christendom as a woman or a man who had no brothers? Yet Berthe had believed herself to be this impossibility; she had been living up to it in utter forgetfulness of her brothers, ignoring them as a heathen might, or using them solely for her own selfish purposes, to work for her and minister to her interests or her pleasures.

Her eye wandered absently from one object to another till it fell upon a pale ivory figure on a velvet background fastened to the wall, and half shrouded by the curtains of the bed.

'I am young; it is not too late; I will begin life afresh,' said Berthe, rising, and moving restlessly across the room. 'I will begin to-morrow; no, to-day—now.' She went close up to the bed, and stood for a moment with clasped hands, her lips moving in quick, low utterances, and then fell upon her knees before the pale thorn-crowned head looking down upon her.

They never knew it; but this conquest of a noble woman's life was perhaps the first victory won by the Breton soldiers who set out to battle that day.

GRACE RAMSAY.

CAUGHT.

EARLY on a cloudless morning,
 In the flowery month of May,
 Peerless Jane, her pillow scorning,
 To the wild flowers hied away.
 Scarce began her woodland ramble,
 Thorns and thickets tripping past,
 When a rude and envious bramble
 Caught her robe and held her fast !

Just in time to extricate her,
Somebody was passing by ;
 Love the rest can best relate—her
 Sweet confusion at the sigh—
Somebody's long sigh enraptured—
 And his look so tenderly
 Telling her that he, too, captured,
 Would not, if he could, be free.

L'ENVOI.

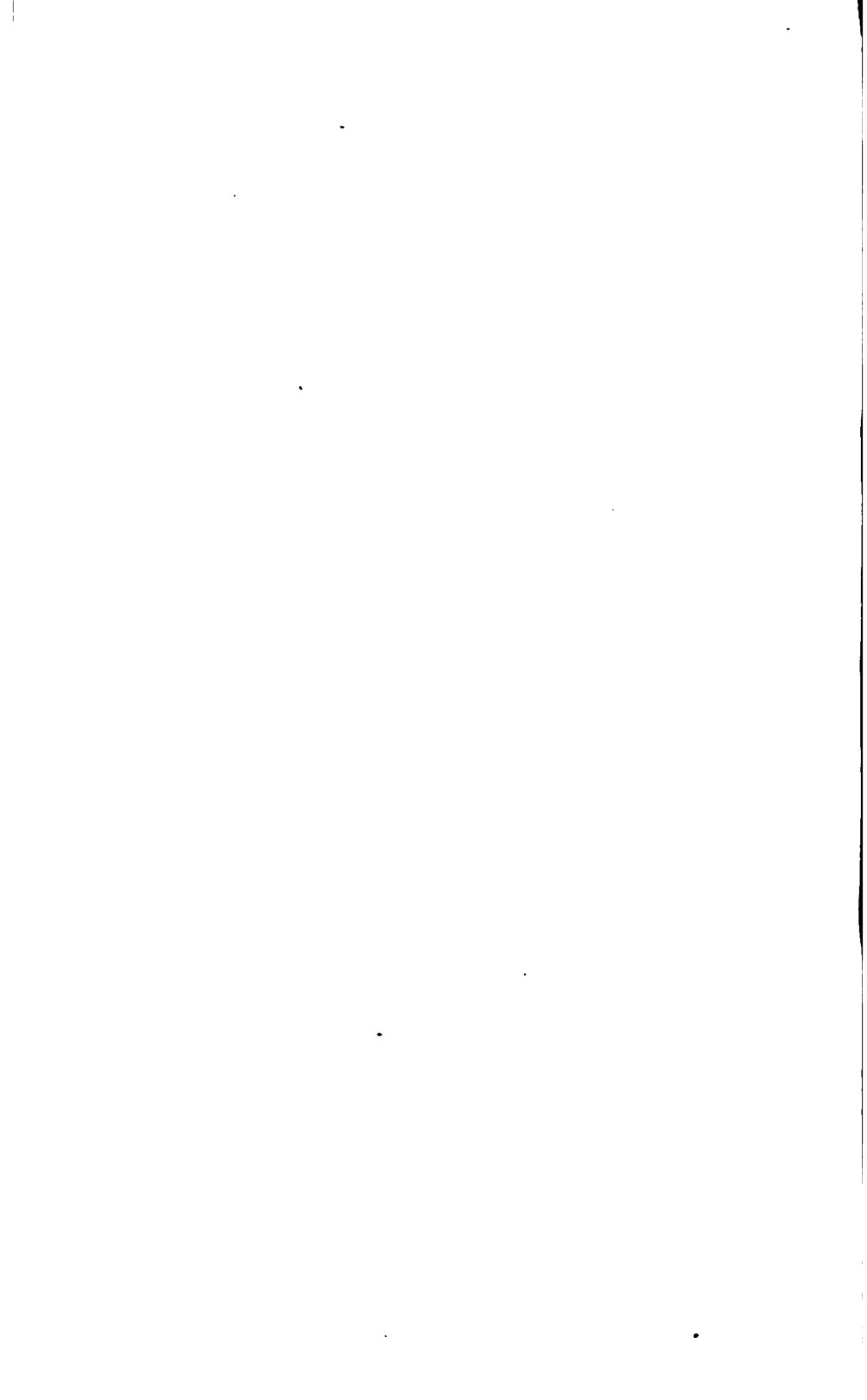
Beauty oft life's vainer pleasures
 Seeking with hope's morning ray,
 Culls the wild flowers' gaudy treasures
 Glittering round her thorny way :
 Culling them without reflection,
 In the brake she's left forlorn,
 Bosom-torn by lost affection,
 Caught by hope's false dream of morn.

JOHN SHEEHAN.



Drawn by C. O. Murray.]

"CAUGHT."



THE KING LEAR OF THE RUSSIAN STEPPES.

Translated from *Ivan Tourguenief*.

By MRS. BURY PALLISER.

ONE winter's evening, a party of college friends had assembled together, and the conversation turned upon Shakspeare, and upon the different characters in his plays, which were all drawn with such astonishing truthfulness that each one could name an Othello, a Hamlet, or a Falstaff, as among the persons they had chanced to meet.—'And I, gentlemen,' said our host, 'have known a King Lear. And he began his narrative.

'I passed my early youth in the country, in the domain of my mother, a rich Russian landed proprietor in the government of X——. The most striking impression that has remained upon my memory, is the person of Martin Petrovitch Kharlof, our nearest neighbour. In my life, I never saw any one like him. Imagine a man of gigantic stature, with an enormous body, upon which was set, without any appearance of neck, a monstrous head, surmounted by a tangled mass of greyish, yellow hair, almost joining his shaggy eyebrows. On his sunburnt face was a broad, flat nose, little blue eyes, and a small mouth. His voice was hoarse but sonorous. The expression of his face was not disagreeable; there was a certain grandeur in it, but so strange, so extraordinary. And then, what arms, what legs, what shoulders! Summer and winter Kharlof wore a kind of tunic of greenish cloth, confined at the waist by a Circassian belt. I never saw him wear a cravat. He breathed slowly and heavily, like a bullock, and walked

noiselessly. His Herculean strength inspired the respect of all the country round, and various legends were circulated relating to it. It was affirmed that one day, on meeting a bear, he felled it to the earth with his fist; and that, on another occasion, having surprised a peasant in his orchard, in the act of stealing his beehives, he flung him over the hedge, together with the horse and cart he had brought to carry away his plunder. But Kharlof did not pride himself on his physical strength so much as upon his birth, his position, and the mental superiority for which he gave himself credit. My mother received him with especial kindness, for he had saved her life, twenty years ago, by stopping her carriage on the edge of a deep ravine into which the horses had fallen. The shafts and harness were broken, but Kharlof never left his hold of the wheel, though the blood was starting from his finger-nails. It was my mother who had given him his wife, an orphan reared in her own house. She died young, leaving two daughters, the eldest of whom was married.

'Kharlof was a good landed proprietor. Of the obedience of his peasantry it were idle to speak. Large and heavy as he was, he never went on foot, but drove a low droski, drawn by an old, decrepid horse, bearing the scar of a wound it had received in battle. Behind the droski sat always his little Cossack boy, Maximka.

'I have already said that my mother treated Kharlof with respect. She saw in him a kind of

devoted giant who, if needs be, would not hesitate to fight a whole army of revolted serfs. Besides, he was loyal, never borrowed money, never drank, and, if he was deficient in education, was not wanting in intelligence. Who would have thought this giant, so confident in his own powers, was subject to fits of melancholy? They would come on without any apparent cause, and he would then shut himself up in his room, and call his Cossack boy to read or sing to him—the colossus Kharlof feared death.

‘Men of great physical power are generally phlegmatic, but this was not his case. His wrath was easily aroused, and no one had the power of more readily irritating him than the brother of his deceased wife, a contemptible little being, half buffoon, half parasite, who lived with us. His name was Bitschkof, but he always bore the sobriquet of Souvenir.

‘I was anxious to see Kharlof’s house, and one day proposed to return with him; it was situated on the top of a hill. We entered the courtyard. On one side was an old habitation with thatched roof, on the other, a newly built house. “See,” said Kharlof, “in what a hovel my father lived, and look at the palace I have built for myself.” It was so slightly built, it looked like a castle of cards. Five or six dogs, each one uglier than the other, saluted us with furious barking. “These are our shepherd dogs,” said Kharlof, “of the true Crimean race. Be quiet, you rascals, or I will hang you all.”

‘A young man in a long nankeen coat appeared at the doorstep of the new house, and reverentially assisted his father-in-law to alight. “Anna,” called Kharlof, “the son of Natalia Nicolavna condescends to visit us. We must

entertain him. Arrange the table immediately. Where is little Evlampia?

“She is not at home; she is gone to the fields to gather corn-flowers.” Evlampia was the younger daughter, and her father’s favourite. In a few minutes all was ready. Surprised at the rapidity with which Kharlof’s orders were executed, I followed him into the dining-room, where, on a table, covered with a white patterned red cloth, was laid out the repast, consisting of curds, cream, wheaten bread, and powdered sugar, mixed with cinnamon. While I was eating, Kharlof fell asleep. Anna stood before me perfectly motionless, her eyes fixed upon the ground, and through the window, I could see her husband leading my horse up and down the courtyard, polishing with his hands the curb chain which he had detached from the bridle.

‘My mother did not like Kharlof’s eldest daughter. She thought her proud. Towards my mother, she was cold and reserved, though she had placed her at school, found her a husband, and presented her on the day of her marriage with a thousand roubles and an Indian shawl. Anna was the terror of the wives and daughters of the peasants.

‘Kharlof woke up. “Anna,” he said, “play something on the piano, that pleases these young gentlemen.” I turned my head, and saw the pitiable semblance of a harpsichord in the corner of the room.

“I obey, father, but I can play nothing which would interest the gentleman; and, besides, the strings are all broken.”

“Then,” said Kharlof, “Vlodka* shall show you the granary,” calling to his son-in-law, who was still walking my horse up and down.

* The diminutive of Vladimir.

Vladimir Slotkine was an orphan whom my mother had sent to the village school, and afterwards married to Anna. She called him her little Jew, and his hooked nose, black eyes, and red lips were quite of the Oriental type. A thirst for gain was the leading feature in his character.

‘In one of the turns of the road, I met the second daughter of Kharlof. A wreath of corn-flowers encircled her head. We saluted each other in silence. Evlampia was less beautiful than her sister, but of a different stamp. Tall and strongly made, everything in her was on a large scale—head, limbs, hands, teeth, and, above all, her eyes of a dull blue with heavy eyelids. This monumental being was a true daughter of Kharlof. Her plait of fair hair was so long she was obliged to twist it three times round her head. There was something wild, almost ferocious, in the expression of her eyes. “She is untameable, of Cossack blood,” said Kharlof. In my heart, she intimidated me; this colossal being too closely resembled her father.

‘One day, towards evening, in the month of June, Kharlof was announced. My mother was astonished, as he never paid such late visits. When he entered the room, he threw himself upon a chair near the door, and looked so pale, the expression of his face so disturbed, that my mother exclaimed, “Speak, speak; something has happened. Has your fit of melancholy returned?”

‘Kharlof knit his brow. “No, it is not my melancholy; that comes on at the full of the moon. Allow me to ask you one question, madam, What do you think of death?”

‘“Of what?” said my mother, startled.

‘“I have just had a nocturnal

hallucination,” he said, in a low tone, “a nocturnal hallucination,” he repeated, “I am a great seer of visions.” Kharlof gave a deep sigh, and continued, “About a week back—it was exactly on the eve of St. Peter—I laid down to rest myself, and fell asleep. Suddenly, I saw enter my room a black colt, which began to gambol and grin at me with his teeth. And then, this same colt turned round and gave me a kick on the left elbow, in the most sensitive part, and I awoke. My left arm was powerless, and so was my left leg. It is paralysis, I said to myself. By degrees circulation returned, but a creeping sensation ran through all my joints, and as soon as I open the palm of my hand, it begins again.”

‘“But, Martin Petrovitch, you have been only lying upon your arm when asleep.”

‘“No, madam, it is not what you are pleased to say. It is a warning I have received; it is the announcement of my death. Consequently, I come to tell you my intentions without loss of time. Not wishing that death should take me unawares, I, the humble slave of the Almighty, have determined to divide, in my lifetime, all my property between my two daughters, Anna and Evlampia.”

‘“A reasonable idea, only it appears to me you are in too great a hurry.”

‘“And as I desire in this same affair,” continued Kharlof, “to observe the necessary legal forms, I beg of your son Dmtri, and to my relation, Bitschkof, I prescribe it as a duty, to witness the accomplishment of the formal act, and the giving over possession to my daughters Anna and Evlampia; which act is to be accomplished the day after to-morrow, at noon, in my own domain of Jeskovo,

with the participation of the authorities who have been invited to attend." Kharlof had great difficulty in delivering this formal speech, which he had evidently learned by heart.

"Is it yourself," asked my mother, "who has prepared this act of division?"

"Yes, and I have sent it in; and the tribunal of the district has received the necessary order to attend." He rose slowly to go. "But wait," cried my mother, "Do you really make over everything to your daughters, without any reservation?"

"Certainly, without reserve."

"And where will you live?"

"Where will I live? why, in my own house, as I have done till now. What change would you have?"

"But, are you sure of your daughters, and of your son-in-law?"

"Is it of Volodka you speak? of that beggar? I will make him do as I will. What power has he? And my daughters! they will feed, clothe, and house me till my death. Is it not their most sacred duty?"

"Assuredly; only—excuse me for saying so, Martin Petrovitch—your eldest daughter, is full of pride, and the second has the look of a wolf."

"Natalie Nicolavna!" exclaimed Kharlof, "what are you saying? Good heavens! They, my daughters, wanting in obedience! an idea not to be dreamt of. What! resist a father! and incur the curse that would await them. They who have passed their lives in trembling submission, and of a sudden to ——" a suffocating cough here seized Kharlof, and my mother hastened to compose him.

"Only, I cannot understand," she urged, "why this immediate

division. After you, the property will go to them. I suppose your melancholy is the cause of all this."

"Ah," returned Kharlof, with some irritation, "you always throw my melancholy in my teeth. It is perhaps a force from above that now acts upon me. I make this immediate division because I will it. I, of my own person, by my own power, fix what shall henceforth belong to each; and each of them having received my gift, shall feel grateful for it, and faithfully execute the will of their father and benefactor." Here Kharlof's voice faltered. "I wish you good morning, madam, and you, sir," he said, turning to me; "I shall have the honour of seeing you the day after to-morrow at my house."

My mother looked at Kharlof as he went away, and shook her head. "This promises no good," she murmured.

On the day appointed, our family coach, drawn by four horses and driven by our head coachmen, a stout, patriarchal figure, with long grey beard, drew majestically up to the door. The importance of the act Kharlof was about to accomplish, and the solemnity of his invitation had reacted upon my mother, and she ordered this state equipage, and desired us to appear in full dress to do honour to her protégé. In half an hour we reached the house; the dog saluted us with his howling, and the numerous children of the servants, who generally swarm in the courtyards, with wooden crosses round their necks, had all disappeared. Slotkine received us at the threshold. We entered the room, in the middle of which sat the motionless form of Kharlof; he had put on his militia jacket, a bronze medal was on his breast, his sword at his side, his left

hand was placed on its hilt, while his right rested upon a pile of papers on the table. He did not stir, he appeared even not to breathe. He scarcely saluted us, but, pointing to a row of chairs, desired us to take our places. On the right were his two daughters in full dress; Anna in a green gown and yellow belt, Evlampia in rose colour and cerise. On the left sat the priest, an aged man, whose sad eyes, worn cassock and ragged boots betokened a life of poverty and labour. Next to him were the attorney and the ispravnik, or head of the police of the district. I was seated near Souvenir, and my mother's steward, Lizinski, beside me. When we were all placed, Kharlof raised himself to his full height and began, "I have invited you, gentlemen, because I feel I am growing old; my infirmities oppress me. I have received a warning, and the hour of death, as you know, comes upon us as a thief in the night; in consequence of which, I do not wish that death should take me unawares. I, the slave of the Almighty," and he repeated, word for word, the phrase he had used to my mother. "Conformably to the decision I have taken," he continued, pointing to the pile of papers on the table, "this formal act has been drawn up, and you shall hear, point by point, my intentions. Approach," says Kharlof to his son-in-law, who stood in an humble posture at the door, "read, it would fatigue me."

Slotkine took the paper, and began to read with a clear but tremulous voice. The shares of the sisters were fixed with the most minute precision. From time to time Kharlof interrupted the reading, "Listen, Anna, this is for you, as a reward for your zeal. Of that I make you a present, my little Evlampia." The

two sisters bowed, and Kharlof gazed on them with unmoved gravity. The seignorial manor (that is, the new house) was assigned to Evlampia, the younger daughter, according to ancient usage. Kharlof reserved to himself the right of occupying the room he then inhabited, and also assigned to himself his complete maintenance, and an allowance of ten roubles a month for his clothing. The last clause in the deed he read himself, "That these wishes of a father may be accomplished by his daughters religiously and unchanged, as a law of the Almighty; for after Him, I am their father and their head, and have no account to render to any one, any more than I have ever rendered. And if my daughters carry out my will, my fatherly benediction shall be on their heads, but if they fail to carry out my will—which heaven forbid—my curse will fall upon them now, henceforth, and to all eternity." Kharlof closed the paper and waved it over his head. Anna threw herself upon her knees, and struck the ground with her forehead. "And you, Evlampia?" said Kharlof. She reddened, and also bowed herself to the earth. "Now rise and sign," said Kharlof. "Sign here, I am grateful and accept, Anna; here, I am grateful and accept, Evlampia." The two women signed, as directed. A minute's silence followed; Kharlof let a sob escape, and then said, in a low voice, "Now all is yours." His daughters and son-in-law exchanged looks, and approaching, kissed him upon the arm between the elbow and the shoulder. The ispravnik then read the legal act, and, advancing upon the doorstep with the sisters, announced the event to the peasants of Kharlof, enjoining them submission to their new proprietors—an admonition

he might have dispensed with, for I never saw more humble countenances, or peasants more tutored to obedience, than those of Kharlof. Dressed in patched caftans and tattered tunics, their waists tightly confined by their belts, as is required on solemn occasions, they stood motionless as statues of stone, and each time the ispravnik addressed them, they made a profound obeisance. Notwithstanding the entreaties of the ispravnik, Kharlof refused to show himself with his daughters. "My subjects," he said, "will obey my will without my presence;" but as if to exhibit his power for the last time, he suddenly put his head out of window, roared out, in a stentorian voice, "Obedience!" and hastily closed the casement. The peasants appeared stupefied.

'At last came the time for the repast. When the inevitable bottle of champagne appeared—champagne made on the banks of the Don—the ispravnik proposed the healths of the new proprietors and that of the magnanimous Martin Petrovitch Kharlof. At the word magnanimous, Slotkine gave an enthusiastic cry, and rushed to embrace his benefactor. Then occurred a disagreeable incident. Souvenir suddenly rose, and with a fiendish laugh, exclaimed, "Magnanimous! magnanimous, indeed; we shall see how he feels when he is turned out, bare-backed, into the snow." "What are you raving about, fool?" said Kharlof, with contempt. "Fool!" replied Souvenir; "we shall soon see who the fool is!" "How dare you insult our revered benefactor?" cried Slotkine; "you know, if he had the slightest wish, he would not hesitate to tear up the act of donation he has so generously granted us."

"But that would not prevent

your turning him out in the snow," said Souvenir.

"Silence!" cried Kharlof, in a thundering voice. "If I were to strike you, Bitschkof, a heap of dirt would alone remain where you now stand. And you, young cur," he said, turning to Slotkine, "hold your tongue, and presume not to put in your nose where you are not called. If I, Martin Petrovitch Kharlof, have decided upon this act, who can destroy it; who, in the whole world, can oppose my will?"

"Martin Petrovitch," began the attorney, "you have just accomplished a great action; but if—which heaven forbid—instead of the gratitude which is your due, you should meet with some great affront——"

'I glanced my eye upon the sisters. Anna appeared to devour the words he was speaking. I never saw the face of a woman more wicked and more venomous, yet more strangely beautiful. Evlampia had turned away; a smile more contemptuous than ever was on her lips. Kharlof rose to speak, but his voice forsook him. He struck the table with such violence that everything rattled in the room.

"Father," Anna hastened to say, "that gentleman little knows us, to speak thus. You are wrong to let it make you angry." Kharlof looked at Evlampia, but she remained stolidly silent. "I thank you, daughter Anna," said Kharlof, in a low voice; "I rely upon you and upon your husband. As for you, sir, you are not made to judge Martin Kharlof; your intelligence does not reach so high. The thing is decided; my decision will not change. I am no longer master here; I am a visitor; and as such I use my privilege to retire." He turned round, and walked slowly out of the room.

'The next day Kharlof came to dine with my mother, who referred to the incidents of the preceding day. "Yes," said Kharlof, "something passed a little serious, but what I have upon my heart is not the idle words of Souvenir, but the bearing of Evlampia. She was stone—a real statue. She feels nothing. Why did she not say to herself, my father must be very ill, must feel his end approaching, thus to give us up all he has; but not a word, not a look; she bowed to the ground, but not in gratitude."

"Why, Kharlof," said my mother, "you seem to complain; you begin to repent and be afraid of the step you have taken."

'This wounded him to the quick. All his pride arose. "I am not among those who complain or are afraid. This earthly globe shall be dissolved before I fail in my word, or that I fear or regret what I have done. As for my daughters, they will never depart from their obedience to their father to all eternity."

'The death of her brother-in-law called my mother away, and it was three months before we came back to our home.

'The first news my servant gave me, on my return, was that large flocks of woodcocks had arrived, and that they were plentiful in the birch woods of Jeskova, the domain of Kharlof. I started directly, and had a good day's sport. On my way homewards I saw a peasant ploughing near the wayside, and immediately recognized in the miserable, starved beast he was belabouring, the favourite animal Kharlof used to drive.

"Is Martin Kharlof dead," I inquired, "that you have his horse?"

"Oh, no," he answered, "but it has been taken and sold. Many things have happened during your absence. Mr. Slotkine is master now."

"And Martin Petrovitch?"

"He has become a mere cipher. Some fine morning he will be turned out of doors."

'When I went in I found something had disturbed my mother. She sent suddenly for Lizinski, and said, "Send a carriage tomorrow morning for Mr. Kharlof, and desire him to come here, as I hear he has no longer one at his disposal, and tell him I must absolutely see him. Tell, also, Slotkine, I order him to appear before me; mind, I order him."

"Martin Petrovitch will not obey," whispered Souvenir; "you cannot imagine what he has become."

'His prediction was verified. My mother wrote him a letter with her own hand. He sent for answer, written upon a piece of dirty paper, "Before heaven, I cannot—shame would kill me. Let me disappear, thank you; do not torment me."

'Slotkine's interview with my mother did not occupy a quarter of an hour. She declared he should never again enter her presence; and "if Kharlof's daughters dare to present themselves—for they have impudence for anything," she said, "show them the door. That miserable Jew," she continued, "whom I have taken out of the mire to make a man of, has the audacity to tell me I have no right to interfere with what does not concern me, and that Martin Petrovitch is treated with too much indulgence—the ungrateful little load!"

'Determined to see Kharlof, I again set out with my gun to Jeskova. Suddenly I heard steps

behind me, and Slotkine came out of the thicket. His face bore no trace of the obsequious humility with which, four months back, he was polishing the curb of my bridle when walking my horse up and down his father-in-law's courtyard. "Have you killed many woodcocks?" he asked. "You are aware you are shooting in our wood; but I give you leave. Your mother was very angry with me yesterday, and would hear of no explanation. I declare solemnly it is impossible to treat Martin Petrovitch otherwise; he is quite childish."

"But why have you sold his horse?"

"Why? A fine question! What use was it? Only to eat hay without profit. If Martin Petrovitch wishes to go out he has only to ask; we never refuse him, unless the horse is at work. Then there is that little vagabond Cossack," he continued. "Martin Petrovitch complains we have taken him from him. What use was he to us? Now we have apprenticed him to a saddler; and when he has learned his trade he will pay us a yearly sum."

"Who, then, now reads to Martin Petrovitch?"

"Read! What an idea, to read at his age! He had but one book, and that, I am thankful to say, has disappeared."

"And who shaves him now?"

"Slotkine assumed an affable laugh, as if it were a good joke, and replied, "No one; at first he singed his beard with a candle; now he lets it grow. Martin Petrovitch is clothed and fed—what can he want besides? Has he not declared that he desires nothing more in this world, but what is for the good of his soul? Besides, he ought to recollect that, put it which way you please, all now belongs to us. He com-

plains we do not pay his allowance. What does he require money for? he wants for nothing. I assure you we treat him well. Now, there are the rooms, for instance, he occupies; we want them badly for ourselves, for we have no space to turn in. Then, we try to provide him occupation. Last St. Peter's day I bought him some fish-hooks—excellent English hooks, very dear. The pond is full of tench, and he has only to sit at the edge and fish all day—what better occupation for an old man? Martin Petrovitch himself approves. You know what a hot, violent man he was; now he has become quite quiet. Your mother is angry with me. She is a great lady, and holds to power as much as did formerly Martin Petrovitch. Come and judge for yourself, and, if an opportunity offers, say a word in our favour. I have the honour to salute you. Kill as many woodcocks as you like. They are birds of passage, and belong to nobody; but if a hare crosses your path, spare it—it is our game."

"When left to myself, I exclaimed, "How is it that Kharlof has not before this exterminated Slotkine? He must be subdued indeed."

"At the end of the garden was the pond.

"Has Kharlof indeed turned fisherman?" I asked myself. I looked round, and at the bottom of a forest of rushes I saw a greyish mass. It was indeed Kharlof, without cap, his hair dishevelled, a kind of linen overcoat rent at every seam, his legs doubled under him: he was seated, motionless, on the bare mud. His whole appearance was so strange that my dog stopped short, and began to growl. Kharlof raised his head, and looked

at me like a wild man. My heart beat violently as I approached and saluted him. "You are there, catching fish, Martin Petrovitch," I said.

"Yes, fishing," he answered, in a hoarse voice, and gave a jerk with his rod, at the end of which was a piece of string, and no hook; and I perceived he had no worms for bait.

"But your hook is broken."

"Broken," he repeated, passing his hand across his eyes. "Is it the son of Natalia Nicolavna?" said he, after some minutes' pause. He still appeared to me a giant, but so thin, such rags, such a wreck.

"Yes," I answered; "I am the son of Natalia Nicolavna; she is much concerned at your refusing to go to see her."

"Have you been there?" said Kharlof, pointing to the house. "Go now. What have you to do here? Useless to talk with me. Go to the house; all goes on wonderfully. My daughters are such excellent housewives. As for me, I am grown old. Quiet, quiet, you know, is the best for me."

"Fine quiet, indeed!" I exclaimed. "Martin Petrovitch, you must come to us."

Kharlof gave me a sad glance. "Go, my friend, go."

"Do not refuse my mother; she will send her carriage for you."

"Go."

"Come, let yourself be persuaded. Why remain here to torment yourself?"

"How torment myself?"

"I mean you are wrong to be as you are." Kharlof seemed to reflect, and, emboldened by his silence, I determined to press him still further. Recollect I was only fifteen. "Martin Petrovitch," I cried, while I placed myself by his side, "I know the shameful

way in which you are treated: what a situation it is for you. But why lose courage? You have certainly committed an imprudence in giving up all to your daughters—it was great, it was generous. But if they show ingratitude it is your part to return it with scorn, and not give yourself up to melancholy."

"Leave me," murmured Kharlof, grinding his teeth, and his eyes, which he kept fixed upon the pond, becoming inflamed with rage. "Begone."

"But, Martin Petrovitch——"

"Begone, I say, or I will kill you. I will throw you into the water, to teach you to dare to come and disturb an old man with your imbecile advice—brat that you are."

"He is gone mad," I thought. Looking at him, I saw Kharlof was crying. Small tears silently trickled down his cheeks, and yet his face had a most ferocious expression. "Begone," he again shouted, "or I will kill you, to serve as an example to others." I picked up my gun, and took to my heels.

About three weeks after, I was standing at my bed-room window, looking gloomily over the yard; the weather for many days had been too bad for shooting, the rain falling in torrents, the roads impassable from mud, the trees bending under a hurricane of wind; the cold so intense, it penetrated to the very marrow of one's bones. It appeared as if the sun would never show itself again; it was quite dark though it was mid-day. I then discerned, crossing the yard and making towards the door, what appeared to me a bear, not on four legs, but erect, like one taught to dance. I could scarcely believe my eyes, and was trying to account for this extraordinary apparition, when a fright-

ful noise came from below. I ran down stairs. At the door stood my mother, petrified with horror, and behind her a cluster of scared female attendants. The steward, footman, and the little Cossack, all open-mouthed, pressing towards the dining-room, in the midst of which, covered with mud, the rain streaming in torrents from his tattered garments, on his knees, panting, gasping, suffocating, was the monstrous black, heavy being I had seen cross the court. It was Kharlof. He breathed heavily, convulsively—it was as if a cauldron was boiling in his breast. All I could distinguish in this filthy mass was his small eyes, which rolled wildly round.

‘At last, my mother exclaimed, “Is this you, Martin Petrovitch?”

“It is indeed me; yes, me,” he replied, in a broken voice.

“Good heavens! what has happened?”

“Nata—lia—Nicalav—na, I have run here on foot.”

“And in such weather; but you do not resemble a human being. Get up and take a seat. And you,” said she, turning to the servants, “bring towels at once, and see if you can find some dry garments for him to put on.”

‘The steward raised his hands. “Where find a garment for such a giant? We will fetch a horse-cloth or a sheet.”

“They have turned me out, madam,” said Kharlof, after a deep groan; “they have turned me out, Natalia Nicolavna, my own daughters—from my own nest.”

‘My mother crossed herself. “How horrible: but get up, Martin Petrovitch; do me this favour.”

‘The servants arrived with towels and a large blanket.

“Come, stand up,” said my mother, in a voice of command, “and tell me all that has happened.” He raised himself slowly,

staggering like a drunken man, drew a chair near, and sank into it. The servants advanced with the towels and blanket, but he motioned them away with his hand, and my mother did not insist.

“Madam Natalia Nicolavna,” at last he began, with effort, “I am going to tell you the whole truth. Pride has been my fall, as much as it was that of Nebuchadnezzar. I said to myself, Heaven has gifted me with intellect, and then, with the fear of approaching death on my mind, my head was turned, and I said, I will show the world, before departing this life, my generosity and my power. I will confer benefits on them all, and all shall be grateful to me to the tomb.” Kharlof started from his chair. “Kicked out like a mangy dog—such is their gratitude. They took away from me Maximka, they took my carriage, my horse, they reduced my food, they did not pay my allowance, all has been miserably curtailed around me. And I said nothing, on account of my pride, that my enemies should not have it in their power to say, “Look at that old fool, see how he now repents; and you, madam, you also had warned me. That is why I would never breathe a word of complaint. To-day, I went into my poor chamber, it was occupied, my bed thrown into a garret, and I was told, ‘You can sleep as well there, we keep you by favour, and we want your room.’ And who said this to me? Volodka Slotkine, a vile upstart, a mis——” Here his voice broke down.

“But, your daughters, what did they say?” asked my mother.

“My daughters! they have no will of their own; they are both the slaves of Volodka. Madam, I cannot support the ingratitude of my children. When Volodka, with

his insolent tongue, told me I should no longer occupy my own room, every timber of which I built with my own hands, heaven knows what darkness overshadowed me, what a knife pierced my heart. I then ran, in this horrible state, to you, my benefactress."

"Come, repose yourself," said my mother, "they shall take you to a warm room; lie down and sleep, and take some tea, and we will talk. Do not lose courage, my old friend; if they have driven you from your house, you will always find a home in mine. I have not forgotten you saved my life. Take him to bed, and when he awakes, send for the tailor to measure him for new clothes." The steward led him to his room, and hastened to procure some linen. Souvenir, who had been watching his opportunity, now came forward, and began dancing and annoying Kharlof. "Good morning, your excellence, let me kiss your hand; but why have you put on your black gloves? You treated me as a parasite, and now you are one yourself. Now you have not a roof that belongs to you. You will eat the bread of charity like me."

"Souvenir," I cried, "besilent," but in vain.

"Oh, you quite frighten me, my little brother. You might at least have combed your beautiful locks, now they must be cut with a scythe. And you still attempt to bluster, you a beggar, a naked worm. Where now is the hereditary roof of which you were so proud?"

"Mr. Bitschkof," I cried, "what are you about, in the name of heaven?" I was alarmed. Kharlof, who had been gradually calmed down by his interview with my mother, was now becoming again excited. He breathed quickly. The

veins of his neck dilated, and his eyes flashed through his bespattered face. I threatened Souvenir to inform my mother, but a very demon seemed to possess him.

"Yes," cried he, "most respectable gentleman. This is what you are come to. Your daughter and your son-in-law jeer at you under your hereditary roof. You said you would curb them, but you are afraid. You thought you could wrestle with Mr. Slotkine, but he is too strong for you."

A fearful yell interrupted Souvenir's harangue. Kharlof's face turned blue, he foamed at the mouth, and his whole frame quivered with fury. "A roof, did you say?" cried he, in his iron voice. "No, I will not curse them, that would be indifferent to them; but a roof! I will destroy it from top to bottom. They shall not have one any more than I. They shall know what it is to turn me in derision. My strength has not yet forsaken me: they shall not have a roof—No, no!" and upsetting the attendants who had just entered, he rushed out of the house.

My mother was greatly disturbed when she heard of Kharlof's departure, and despatched Lizinski to bring him back at all costs. In an hour he returned alone. "What has happened, that he does not come?"

"Nothing has happened to him, but he is pulling down his house. He is standing on the roof, and has already thrown down thirty planks and a dozen rafters."

My mother exclaimed, "Alone upon the roof, and pulling down the house!"

"As I have the honour of informing you, madam. He is breaking everything, right and left; his strength is, as you know, supernatural. And the roof is not very

solid; it is made of batten and laths. I propose returning again with some of our people, and seeing what can be done. The peasants have all hid themselves from fear."

"I ran to the stables and galloped off to Jeskova. When I reached the carriage-gate, I was dumb with stupor. Of a third of the roof of the new house, the skeleton only remained. Piles of planks were heaped on each side of the walls, and on the top floor rolled a blackened mass, now shaking the shaft of a chimney, now tearing a rafter from the roof and throwing it on the ground. It was Kharlof, his rags and his hair fluttering in the wind. It was horrible to see, it was more horrible to hear him. A crowd of peasants, servants, and children filled the court. On the doorsteps of the other house stood the aged priest, raising from time to time an old copper crucifix, which he held towards Kharlof in silence and despair. Near him stood Evlampia, looking at her father with gloomy earnestness. Anna remained within, but would now rush into the court, now return into the house. Slotkine, armed with a gun, paced up and down, panting, shivering, threatening, levelling his piece at Kharlof, and then throwing it back on his shoulder. As soon as he saw us, he ran up.

"See what has happened," he said, in a doleful tone; "he has gone quite mad. See what he is doing. I have sent for the police; if I fire upon him, I shall not be answerable in the eyes of the law, for every one has a right to defend his own property. I am now going to fire. Martin Petrovitch, come down, or I fire."

"Fire!" answered from the roof a terrible voice. In the meantime, I send you a present." A long plank whistled through the

air, and fell at the feet of Slotkine.

"Fetch a ladder," said Slotkine to a group of peasants. "Climb all, and save my property."

"Where to find it?" answered the group. "And if there were one, who would mount it? Not such fools. He would wring every one of our necks, like so many chickens." It was evident that, even if the danger had been less, the peasants would not have obeyed their new master. They almost approved of Kharlof, and certainly admired him.

"Thieves! rascals!" vociferated Slotkine. At this moment, the last chimney fell in with a tremendous crash, and as the cloud of yellow dust cleared away, Kharlof was to be seen shouting in triumph, and holding up his begrimed and blood-stained hands. Slotkine again levelled his gun, but Evlampia pushed back his elbow. "Do not prevent me," he cried, with fury.

"You dare not," she said, her blue eyes lighting up under her close-set eyebrows. "The father," she says, "destroys his own house—it is his own."

"False, it is ours."

"You say so, and I, his daughter, tell you it is his." Slotkine was bursting with rage.

"Ah, good day, good day, my beloved daughter," cried Kharlof from above.

"Finish, father, and come down, come to me; we are all guilty, but we will restore all; believe your daughter, and come down."

"By what right do you take this decision upon yourself," interrupted Slotkine. Evlampia did not condescend a reply. "I will restore you my share," continued she, "I will render you all, father; forgive us, forgive me."

Kharlof smiled. "Too late,

my dove; your stony heart is moved too late. Do not look upon me, I am a lost man. Look rather at Volodka, at your viper sister. Now, my little gentleman, you wished to deprive me of my roof, well, I will not leave one rafter upon another. I have fashioned and laid them all with my own hands, and with my own hands alone will I destroy them. You see, I have not taken an axe."

"Finish, father," resumed Evlampia, in a caressing voice, "do believe me, you always have believed me; come down into my little room, come up on my bed; I will dry your clothes—I will warm you—I will dress your wounds. See how your poor hands are torn. Yes, we have been very guilty, but you will forgive."

Kharlof tossed his head. "Idle talk! I, believe you! you have killed all belief in me. You have killed everything. I was an eagle, and I made myself a worm for you, and you have put your heel upon the worm. I loved you—you know how much. Now you are no longer my daughter, I am no more your father. I am a lost man. And you, fire, you coward," he cried, suddenly turning round to Slotkine. "Why do you only point your gun at me? But, perhaps you remember the law: 'If the receiver attempt the life of the donor, the last has a right to take back his gift.' Don't be afraid, great lawyer, I ask for nothing—I will see after myself. Fire!"

"At this moment Lizinski appeared with his party. "What an army against me," cried Kharlof; "but I give notice that whoever pays me a visit up here, will return down head foremost." His aspect was so terrible, that the men who had reached the top quickly descended by the gutter, to the derision and delight of the people assembled below.

Kharlof returned to the front, and seizing with his two hands the pair of rafters which formed the point of the roof, began rocking them backwards and forwards to the measure of a tune he was singing, like the boatmen on a river.

"Lizinski," said Slotkine, "let me fire one shot, if it is only to frighten him." Lizinski had no time to reply, for the rafters, furiously rocked by the iron hands of Kharlof, at last gave way. They fell with a crash, and carried him down along with them. He struck the ground with his whole might, and the long beam which forms the top of the roof followed the rafters in their descent, and fell upon the shoulders of the unfortunate Kharlof. "It is finished," murmured the peasants. Pale as death, Evlampia placed herself by her father, and fixed upon him her motionless eye. Neither Anna nor Slotkine dared approach him. All was silent in mournful expectation. At last, a convulsive gurgle was heard, he opened one eye, looked listlessly round and stammered, "Bro-ken." Then, after a pause—"The black colt." A stream of blood gushed from his mouth—I thought it was the end, but Kharlof again opened his eye, and looking at Evlampia, said, with a sinking voice, "It is you, my daughter, I—" and expired. The heavy beam had broken his spine. Evlampia fell, a senseless mass, at the feet of the body of her inanimate father.

"What were his last words?" I said to myself. Did he wish to pardon or to curse her? In my own heart, I felt he had forgiven her.

'Some days after the funeral, it was rumoured that Evlampia had left the paternal house for ever, resigning all her share of the inheritance to her sister.'

CARDINGTON AND COURSING.

‘CARDINGTON and coursing’ is a charming instance of alliteration — odious vulgarity though it be in the estimation of such a purist as Mr. Musgrave Wilkins—which, however, is not likely again to offend the ears or opinions of the staunchest friends or the most inveterate foes of the sport, for coursing is no longer associated with Cardington. In his summary of coursing grounds, Blaine says, ‘The Cardington Club holds a club meeting in November, and an open meeting in February. It enjoys the privilege of coursing over a country rich to the eye of an agriculturist, lovely to the gaze of an admirer of cultivated beauty, and charming to the sight of a sportsman, who rejoices in a light soil spread out in extensive slopes. The courser may well for a moment forget his anticipation of the superior sport he is sure to enjoy, as he draws near the meet at Cardington—a choice specimen of a sequestered village, approached through an avenue of majestic trees.’ Alas! the Cardington Club has been suffered to collapse entirely, and this, too, in the county of Bedfordshire, and with the fine property of Mr. Whitbread to course over. There are finer coursing grounds in this country than Cardington, certainly, and it never could rank with Amesbury, Ashdown Park, or Newmarket; but for a thoroughly enjoyable and old-fashioned meeting, both as regarded style of courser, manner of entertainment, and quality of greyhound, Cardington might well bear comparison with, if it did not bear away the palm from, most other meetings in England. During the coursing week, every man in the village, from the

steward of the manor to the veriest *adscriptus glebe*, considered his own character for hospitality affected, if guests were not befittingly entertained and plenty of hares provided, in order that none might go empty or dissatisfied away. On a small scale, indeed, but not the less perfect on that account, there was a rivalry between the little village and Bedford concerning ability to provide for unexpected visitors; and while Cardington would rather have burst than have refused a guest, Bedford was fain to court patronage by sending out inviting-looking ‘traps’ in all directions, for the convenience of such as preferred the certainty of comfort in a grand hotel, to the improbability of anything in particular of that kind in any temporary ‘shake-down’ they could get and be thankful for. But it must be remarked that this rivalry was of the purest and most high-minded sort. It was not a mere wrangling for the possession of a traveller, as may be seen, sometimes, between opposing representatives of popular hotels at a railway station—the possessors of the greatest amount of luggage being generally the most pertinaciously beset—but an honourable, though perhaps unseemly and frequently unpleasant, contention; or perhaps more correctly, a generous though too demonstrative emulation in the upholding of the reputation of the county. The prospect of ulterior advantages never appeared to guide the competitors in the selection of their object of attention, nor were they at all careful to contemplate the probable length of the visitor’s sojourn, nor apparent capacity of his purse; their

tariff during the coursing week being altered so as to meet the requirements of every class of comer. In short, honour was the order of the day everywhere and in everything, and even the betting was transacted in the most unobjectionable manner, and with the apparently sole object of testing the rival merits of the competing greyhounds, the mere notion of regarding their performances as a legitimate means of making money being utterly eschewed—an excellent thing at coursing meetings.

The powers of Mr. and Mrs. Witty were sorely taxed in the matter of cookery, and the subject of preparation for the draw dinner must have caused them much mental anxiety for many a week before the great event actually came off. All the beds at their cosy little inn were always engaged long before the day, and it must have caused the landlord and his hospitable wife sore pangs to be compelled to send so many hungry and roofless wayfarers into Bedford, when the entire accommodation of the village was used up. It was great fun, certainly, for a fellow who had been on the tramp the whole day, inquiring for a bed after his dinner, and being told that there was nothing for it but to get to Bedford somehow or other—a distance of four miles—or take up his lodging 'upon the cold ground.' Many uninitiated coursers were deluded into the notion that any number of beds were to be had for the asking, from the peculiar and expressive 'information' conveyed by the Bedfordshire constabulary. Those gentlemen, or their superiors for them—the inferior order of county constable being not frequently credited with the possession of any opinion on any matter upon which he cannot argue from

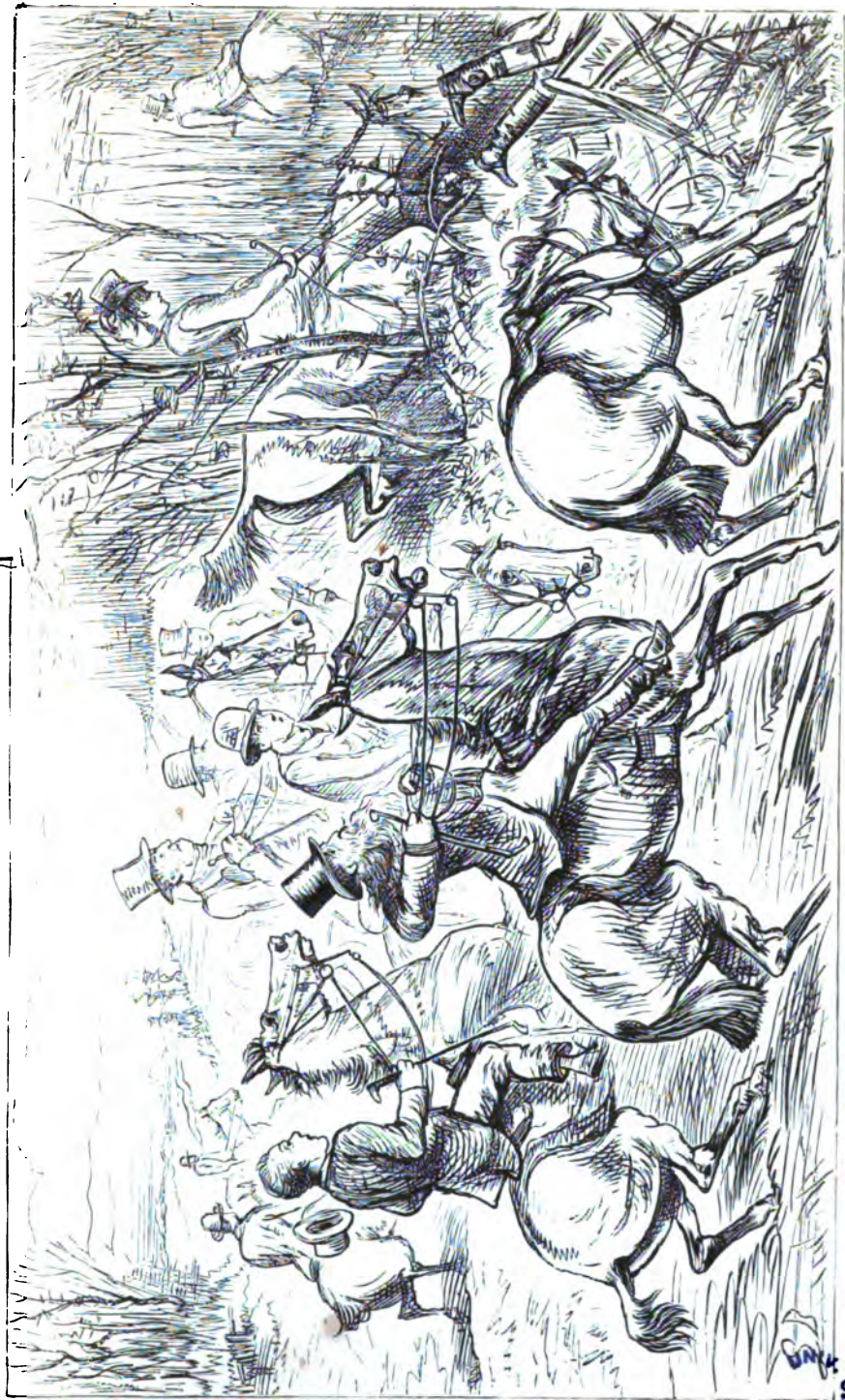
information received—delight in brevity of diction and skirts, and their coat-collars are labelled with their respective numbers, and the sphere of their operations and usefulness is denominated 'Beds.' Numbers of the constabulary turn out during a Cardington coursing meeting, not that their services are ever seriously called upon except occasionally for keeping back a too enthusiastic crowd, though it is evident from the suspicious glances cast upon, strangers, that the ancient city of Bedford has a thieves' quarter among her other objects of interest. Number seven used to be a distinguished and highly honoured member of the force, for to him was assigned the onerous duty of supervising strategic operations during the coursing; and the ubiquity, not less than the urbanity, of this individual, was always a theme of laudatory conversation among the visitors of every description. Indeed the suave manners of the officer led many to suppose that, by an ingenious and highly gentlemanly device, the Bedfordshire constabulary had hit upon a plan of informing the public of the number of available and vacant beds in the district; '7 Beds' being very well calculated to induce this belief among a singularly unsophisticated class of men, as we all know coursing votaries to be. The question of the number of beds to be let has been even made the subject of a bet, for when sport is slow men will resort to 'any mortal thing,' as they phrase it, in order to have 'something on;' and the temporary disappearance of number seven—policemen are mortal, even in the country, and duty at a coursing meeting, when conscientiously discharged, renders the most abstemious of policemen thirsty—has induced a member of that dis-

tinguished order known as 'the cognoscenti,' to lay the odds of two to one that there were only six beds to be had in the neighbourhood; the fact being that '6 Beds' was holding the reins of power during the adjournment of his superior to the bar or kitchen of Mr. Witty.

The ground was much too trying and holding, being principally fallow, for the trials of such numbers of saplings as used to contend at Cardington; and it was absolutely distressing to witness the 'gruelling' that some of them suffered in their tremendous essays. The kills were, consequently, less frequent than on other grounds, and the number of complimentary presents in the shape of well-coursed hares necessarily restricted. The judge needed to be a man of great experience, nerve, and determination, for the courses were sometimes of such length and of such a difficult nature, that it was frequently necessary to give the flat even while the greyhounds were yet coursing, and when the hare was still in sight. Cardington requires a good horseman for an efficient judge, and a good horse must be under him if satisfaction is to be given to competitors. But the worst of a hard-riding judge is, that he is so intent upon showing off his horsemanship, or is so full of enjoyment on the outside of such a horse as he does not mount every day, that he is not always duly observant of the performances of the greyhounds. It once happened that two black greyhounds were slipped to a rare straight-backed hare over the fallow, before a judge of the hard-riding order, and a pretty hash he was going to make of his decision, but for the kind intercession of a gentleman present. The greyhounds wore the usual distinguishing

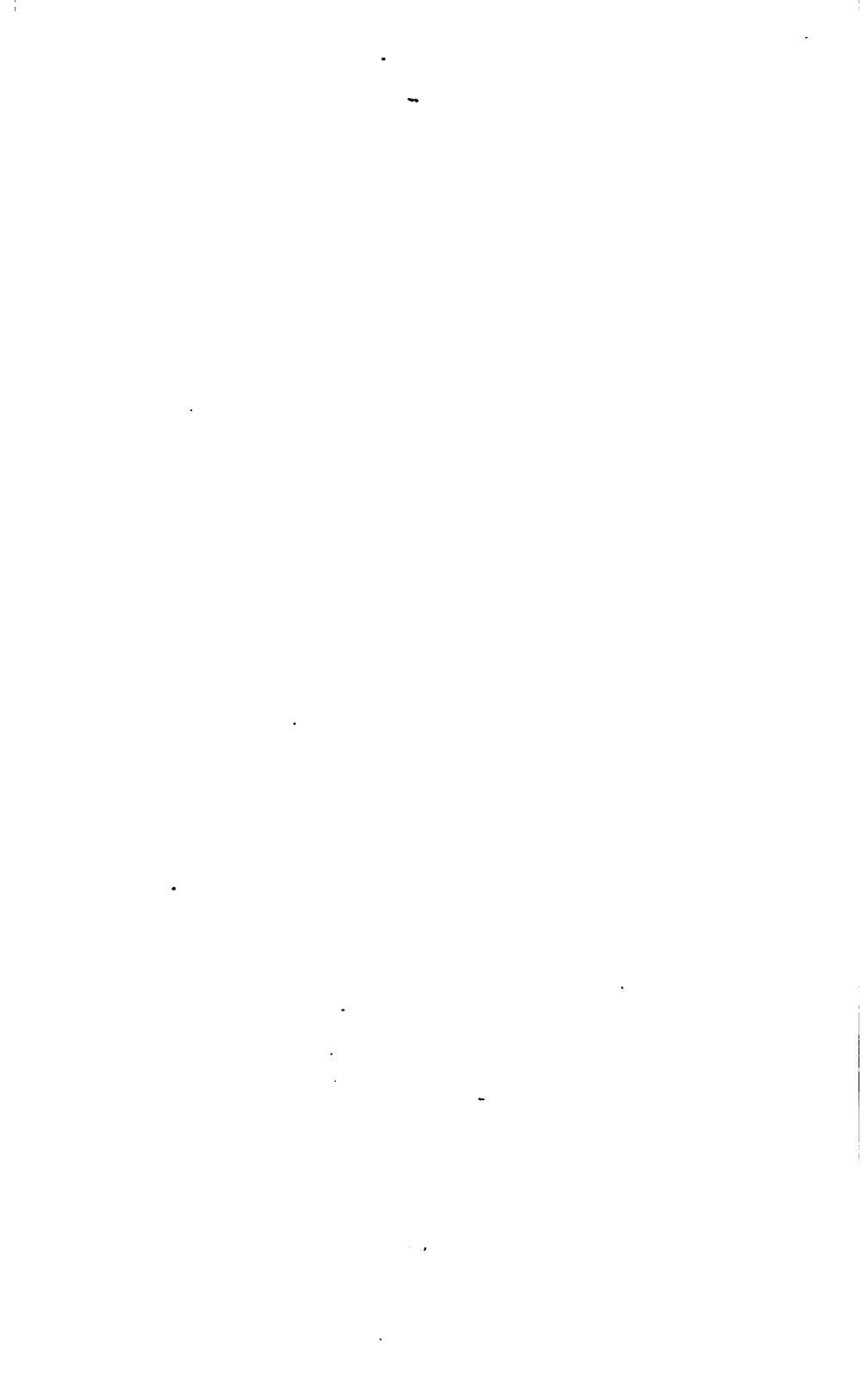
badge in such cases made and provided, namely, a white collar for the one, and a red collar for the other; and so clearly, to everybody who had had an opportunity of witnessing the course, had been the defeat of the white-collared greyhound, that there was a general outburst of astonishment, not to say of indignation, when the wrong flag was hoisted upon the wrongful decision of the judge. The plain fact of the matter was that he had seen next to nothing of the course from start to finish, and had decided at the merest hap-hazard, having perceived that one dog was vastly superior to the other, from the overheard expressions of the bystanders. The disinterested spectator, who was not willing that the judge should lose his reputation for such a glaring mistake, advised that functionary to have the greyhounds brought before him before his too hasty decision had been rendered irrevocable; though it is said that the decision of a coursing judge, like that of an umpire at a cricket match, can never be too quickly given. The dog that wore the red collar had had the course nearly entirely to himself, so superior was he to his antagonist; and upon the gentlest of hints from the gentleman, the judge instantly declared that that was the greyhound which he had intended to adjudge the winner of the course, and thus matters were fortunately put all straight again before an appeal was rendered necessary to the sporting newspapers, the National Coursing Club, and all the other mediums for the ventilation of a grievance.

It is a sorry sight to see a thin attendance at a draw dinner, and still worse to be present at a meagrely-attended board at the conclusion of the first day's coursing. But such a calamity



TWO WAYS OF GOING OVER.

Drawn by G. Fowers.]



was a very rare occurrence at Cardington, in the palmy days of its coursing club meetings, the number of visitors being generally far too great for the comfortable accommodation of them all. But everybody was resolved to be comfortable somehow or other, and very little grumbling was heard if all could at any time have a quiet twenty minutes with a warm joint before proceeding to business, no matter to what luxuries and delicacies of the season the more fortunate and punctual portion of the company might have been treated. Of course, upon the removal of the cloth, and when so much elbow-room was not necessary, there was ample accommodation for all, provided the less important members would be content to regale themselves at smaller and extemporised festive boards—for all sorts of shifts had to be resorted to when the company assembled in unusually strong force. -

That the dinner itself was excellent it is hardly necessary to remark, as coursing dinners invariably are excellent, if you are not too particular in the unimportant matter of wines. The best way is to be content with good substantial home-brewed, if you can get it, and wind up your bacchanalian propensities with the liquor most in vogue among the agriculturists of the district, whatever that may happen to be. The reading over of the card was a matter of some difficulty, and the printer from Bedford was not the most accurate member of his profession; but some coursers will indulge in such outlandish and incomprehensible nomenclature, that it is almost an impossibility for an ordinary provincial compositor, notwithstanding he may have had considerable and wearisome experience in secretarial

deciphering, to make head or tail of his 'copy.' An interesting digression might profitably be made here upon the subject of canine nomenclature, and the principles, or rather the want of them, upon which the sponsorial duties of the proprietors of greyhounds are performed. But dinner has been announced, the call over has already been made, and the very few and insignificant bets, for which Cardington coursing is remarkable, have been made. The absence of the betting man proper—the coursing professional book-maker, a peculiarly repulsive object—was for the most part, and among the majority of the company, a decided matter for congratulation. 'The feast of reason and the flow of soul' was a singularly distinguishing characteristic of the Cardington dinner, and even the very printer's delegate contributed a song towards the general fund of conviviality. There was one gentleman whose good-tempered face is very familiar at almost all sporting gatherings of every kind throughout the kingdom, who was always ready and anxious to favour the company with a song, and even to act as substitute in a musical capacity for any bashful member who had been called upon in turn to 'tune up something or other with a good chorus to it;' and he, so long as wind permitted, would never tire of recounting the imaginary transactions that took place when he and a certain John Brown were boys together. And thus was the betting element, and even conversation about 'the long-tails,' eliminated from the general business, after the card had been read and the few investments for the morrow made; and so desirous were all to be present when the punch was going round and the songs were in full flow, that each

man would have been fain to remark with Horace—

*'... Ubi plura mitent . . . non ego paucis
Offendar maculis, quas aut incuria fudit,
Aut humana parum cavit natura!'*

But about a bed. The landlord has not so much as a shake-down in a hayloft, so what is to be done? 'Bless my soul!' says a portly gentleman on my right, 'haven't you procured a bed yet?'

'Thought I should be sure to get one here.'

'Bless your heart! they have been all engaged a week or more. You'll never find your way to Bedford to-night.'

'Well, no, I don't think I shall. Must take the sleep out here, I suppose, upon one of the forms, eh?'

'That will never do; you'll be fit for nothing in the morning, and we want you bad. Hold hard a minute, while I run over to the missus, and I'll see what she can do for you.'

Off he went to his missus, and soon returned with the gratifying intelligence that supper and the best bed—the one usually set apart for the steward, when that great personage visited the neighbourhood; he was dining with us then, in fact, but did not require his customary sleeping apartment—were at my service, if I would graciously condescend to accept of them. Imagine the gracious condescension of a fellow who positively knew not where to lay his head, in accepting the best supper and downiest bed in Cardington that raw night!

'Done along with you, my friend; and excuse me, but you are a brick!'

See the advantage of being communicative and fraternal at a coursing dinner! There must have been something highly in-

teresting or fascinating in my conversation, though I am not aware that I expatiated on any subject in particular, except it might be the cultivation of the turnip, in which I considered myself more than ordinarily versed. I cannot imagine that my singing had produced this extraordinary generosity on the part of my friend, for I made a terrible hash of a solo I attempted at the repeated requests of the John Brown man, who declared that I had such a singing face, that he was sure I could oblige the company if I would make the attempt, though I flatter myself that my assistance in the various choruses was sufficiently stentorian, if not precisely effective. Indeed, the printer, who was rather a swell in the singing department, ventured to declare as much, and kindly put the drag on once or twice when I was 'coming it' a little too strong.

'Always like to do Witty a good turn when I can,' said my kind entertainer. 'So you see you can just pay him the ordinary charge for a bed, as if you slept at his house.'

But the sly old gentleman did not tell me that his 'missus' had got up a little party of her own, consisting of some very musical young ladies and gentlemen from Bedford; and these, together with her own daughters, any information about whom racks and thumb-screws shall be impotent to extract from me, rendered the evening eminently pleasant and agreeable. But the bed, the breakfast in the morning, and the drive to the meet by my host himself, are subjects which it is quite beyond the power of my pen adequately to describe. Let it suffice that they were all excellent and unique of their kind, and that they were of themselves

sufficient to cause a regret that coursing should be discontinued at Cardington.

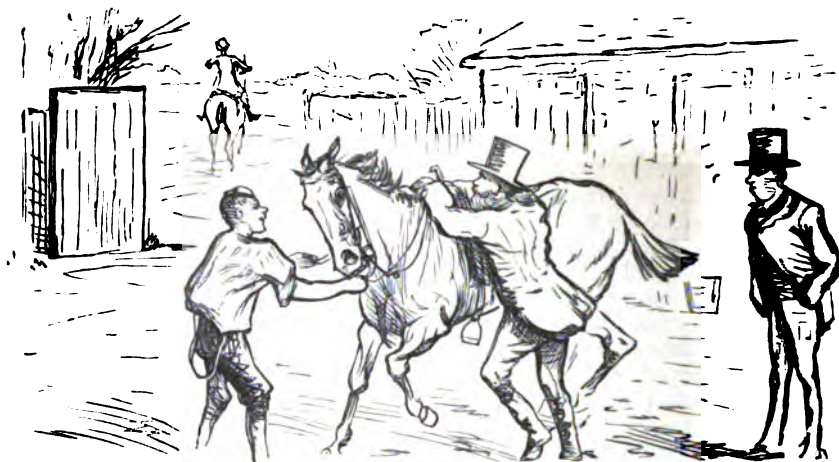
The fictitious importance conferred upon me by this attention was not without its effect upon the less favoured and upon the officials. I was offered a horse to ride for an hour or two, and was so unfortunate as to throw him once and myself twice before resigning him—gladly enough, for he was an unmitigated brute, and would not jump over a straw—into

the hands of his proprietor. But the attention culminated when, upon getting into the train at the station, the keeper and slipper presented me with a brace of hares with Mr. Blank's compliments.

'Much obliged to Mr. Blank, indeed. My best thanks and compliments to him, and I hope to make his better acquaintance, and yours too, when I next visit Cardington.'

SIRIUS.





ONLY A LITTLE AWKWARD TO MOUNT.



'WARE HEELS' AT THE MEET.



'A HARD MOUTH, SIR?' RATHER!

HIRED FOR THE DAY.



TWO OPINIONS ON THE SUBJECT.



'TOLD OUT,' ON THE PLOUGH.



TWENTY MILES FROM HOME.

HIRED FOR THE DAY.

BROTHER AGAINST BROTHER.

An Episode of the American Rebellion.

BY CAPTAIN MAYNE REID.

TWELVE months before the first gun was fired at Fort Sumter, bad blood had begun to show itself—even in good society. Not only was it causing strife between cousins and more distant kindred, but in many instances weakening the ties of affection in the family circle itself. Fathers were opposed in opinion to their sons; brothers disputed with brothers; and even sisters took opposite sides on a question among the fair sex hitherto unheard of. It was the question of Northern or Southern ascendancy—with the negro for its nucleus.

A dark shadow had come over the cottage hearths of the poor, that could not be kept out of the drawing-rooms of the rich; and into many a home, erst happy and cheerful, a grim skeleton was preparing to enter.

Places of fashionable resort were not free from the infection of these antagonistic ideas; and nowhere were they more rife than at Newport in the state of Rhode Island. This celebrated watering-place, for long years a sort of neutral ground, where the best society of North and South had been accustomed to meet in friendly intimacy, became an arena of bitterness. It was a sad change from the pleasant intercourse hitherto there prevailing. The Northern youth bore it with a certain rational calmness; while the more impulsive sons of the South too frequently exhibited a temper the very opposite.

* * *

'But you do not mean it Mr. Devereux? I'm sure you do not!'

'If ever I meant anything, Miss Winthrop, I mean that.'

'And you would absolutely fight against the old Stars and Stripes? That flag, which—if it hasn't "braved a thousand years the battle and the breeze," *will*—ay, I'm sure it will!'

'If borne much longer as it is now, I'd be among the first to drag it down.'

'O mercy! Where is your patriotism? Mr. Devereux, you offend me by speaking so. Do you know, sir, that my ancestors were among the first to raise that flag; and he can be no *friend* of mine who talks about dragging it down.'

The two individuals thus differing in political opinions, were a young lady of Boston, Massachusetts, and a young gentleman of Richmond, Virginia; both of the best blood in their respective sections of the country: since both were descended from 'Signers of the Declaration of Independence.'

And it was far from being the first time that the handsome Virginian had held *tête-à-tête* with Miss Winthrop—one of the most beautiful maidens of Massachusetts.

It would have sorely grieved him to think it should be the last—ay, cut him to the heart of hearts: for his was in the keeping of Adeline Winthrop, as he fondly fancied hers was captive to him. In this fond fancy he was mistaken, and little dreamt at that moment how near he was to discovering his mistake.

Feeling confident of possession,

the last speech of the young lady nettled him. The emphasis on the word 'friend' was significant of a relationship nearer and dearer; and pointed directly to himself. So, thought he, and so thinking, his rejoinder, instead of being conciliatory, was tinged with a tone of defiance.

'Indeed!' he replied, pettishly, 'I believe *my* ancestors had also something to do with the raising of that flag. What matters, now that it is becoming soiled by rank abolitionism, and carried by your scum of Puritans.'

'Hold, Mr. Devereux!' exclaimed the young girl, blushing red as she interrupted him. 'You forget that I have myself Puritan blood in my veins? Though we may have changed far from the stern, simple standard of our forefathers, their cause, at least, was a good one. And was it not the same as that of the Huguenots, from whom you claim descent?'

'The Huguenots were *gentlemen*.'

'You do well to use the past tense, Walter Devereux, while thus speaking of your ancestors! I shall not be so severe upon them as to say their sons have *all* degenerated. There are gentlemen among them still. Yonder is one.'

The Virginian turned quickly on his heel, with a black look upon his brow. He beheld a young officer, wearing the shoulder-straps of a lieutenant, and the uniform of the United States Artillery—a corps of which was at the time stationed in Newport. The officer was his own brother!

Strange to say the shadow upon Walter Devereux's brow did not disappear; even after his brother had come up to the porch, and saluted the lady by his side. It became darker, as the conversation continued.

'I'm sure the lieutenant does

not share your sentiments?' said Miss Winthrop, interrogatively.

'What sentiments?' asked the youth newly arrived.

'It's the old story between North and South. Walter says, if things go much further he'd take pleasure in pulling down the "star-spangled banner." Nay, he'd be among the first to do it! You would be among the last. Would you not, Harry?'

'Miss Winthrop, the button upon my coat should be a sufficient answer to your interrogatory. I'll stay true to the old flag, if it should lose me every friend I've got.'

'Bravo!' cried the Boston beauty, springing up from her rocking-chair, and stamping her little foot triumphantly on the planks of the piazza, 'There's *one* you won't lose by it; that's Adeline Winthrop!'

'Since you're so well agreed,' said Walter Devereux, biting his lips with chagrin, 'I can't do better than leave you alone. It would spoil the sport of such a pair of negro-loving lambs were a Southern wolf to remain in their company. Good-day, Miss Winthrop! I hope you won't make my brother quite so "black" as yourself!'

A cry of indignation came from the girl.

'For shame, Walter,' interposed the lieutenant. 'If you were not my own brother—'

Walter did not wait to hear the threat. With a sombre scowl he had hurried down the steps, and on over the lawn, in the direction of the 'cliffs.'

On reaching them, at the head of the sloping ravine, he did not go down; only so far as to conceal the greater part of his person. There, screened by some bushes, with an opera-glass to his eye, he remained, his gaze earnestly fixed

upon the pair from whom he had parted.

Still darker grew his face—still whiter his lips—as he saw his brother take hold of Adeline Winthrop's hand, and imprint upon it a kiss!

There was no show of resistance. The soft, tapering fingers had been yielded.

With a dire thought in his heart, and a wild word upon his lips, Walter Devereux returned to his hotel.

* * *

Twelve months after the incident related a military encampment stood upon the banks of one of Virginia's largest rivers, with the marquee of a general in its midst. Seated inside this, was the commander-in-chief of the Federal army; while standing before him was a young officer in artillery uniform, with the double-barred straps of a captain upon his shoulders. The latter was Harry Devereux—late lieutenant—just promoted for a dashing feat with his battery of light guns.

He had entered the tent in obedience to a summons; and having saluted the commander-in-chief, stood waiting the word. The two were alone; the orderly who ushered in the young officer having retired.

'You are Captain Devereux?' said the general, putting aside the papers with which he had been occupied. 'Captain Harry Devereux of the—th Light Battery?'

'I am. You sent for me, general?'

'I have, Captain Devereux? There is reason to believe that a large reconnoitring party of the enemy is halted not far off in our front; and it is necessary for me to be sure. It is of the utmost importance to ascertain its exact position, as also its strength. I want you to discover both, if you

can. I've been told that you are well acquainted with the country around here. Is that so?'

'I was born and brought up in it, general.'

'That is my reason for employing you on this duty,' rejoined the general, 'though some might think it a reason for *not* doing so,' he added, with a significant smile.

The young officer bowed, but without making other answer. Had the general known the sacrifices he had already sustained by fighting on the Northern side—a complete ostracism from friends, family, and home—he would have had no scruples about reposing confidence in him.

Nor had he; for, without asking further explanation he proceeded: 'You will take twenty mounted men with you—your own artillerymen will be best—and ride up the main road. Steal quietly out of camp, and feel your way with caution. Go as far as you can with safety, and have a care you don't get captured by a picket or patrolling party of the enemy.'

Captain Devereux smiled assuringly.

'There won't be much danger of that, general,' he answered. 'I may get killed, but not captured. In my case, death would be preferable to being made prisoner.'

'I understand you, captain. No doubt you will act with due discretion. Get as near the enemy's lines as possible; and, after you have finished your *reconnaissance*, lose no time in reporting to me. Good night, and God speed you!'

* * *

In twenty minutes after Captain Devereux had parted from the commander-in-chief, he rode out through the lines of the Federal encampment, twenty artillerymen, equipped to act as light cavalry, filing 'in twos' behind him.

The sun had already sunk be-

yond the dark wall of forest that skirted the horizon; while the moon, in mid heaven, was mirrored on the broad bosom of the Potomac.

It was a night far from favourable for a *reconnaissance*, such as that Harry Devereux had been commanded to make. The clear moonlight would be to the advantage of a picket in ambush, and against a party making approach. And the moon coursing near the zenith flung her beams fair upon the road, along which the artillery officer had been directed to make the scouting excursion. It was a broad highway—one of the main routes running north and south through the State of Virginia. A little later, and the tall trees growing on each side would throw their shadows over it, making the passage more safe.

After advancing nearly three miles along it, Captain Devereux saw the risk he was running. Should there prove to be a party of the enemy in front and at rest, they could not fail to have warning of his approach. The trampling of his horses would betray him.

Thus apprehensive, the young officer halted his little troop at a turning. He was reflecting whether he should not stay till the moon sank a little lower, when a sound, coming from the opposite side, interrupted his reflections. It was the tramp of horses' hoofs, as of a troop going at a trot; and that they were armed men, could be told by the clash of steel scabbards striking against the stirrups.

'A patrol of rebel cavalry!' whispered the sergeant at his side.

About this there could be no doubt. The direction from which they approached made the thing not only probable, but certain.

Halted upon higher ground, the artillery officer commanded a view of the approaching horsemen. As

near as he could tell they numbered about fifty sabres.

Though with only twenty men at his back, Harry Devereux did not think of retreating. Instead of being surprised by a picket, he was himself the party in ambush; and this advantage encouraged him to keep his ground.

The Confederates came on without fear. Knowing themselves nearly three miles from the Federal camp, they had no expectation of encountering an enemy.

They were only made aware of one when a horse neighed loudly in their front; the neigh being quickly followed by some half dozen others, and responded to by the horses they were riding. And then, before the shrill echoes had died away in the woods, they were taken up by sounds more indicative of deadly strife—by a volley from each side continued in straggling shots.

Several Confederate saddles were emptied; and the 'cavaliers' in grey were inclined to turn round and retreat; when one who appeared to be their leader, and whose actions proved him to have the right, drawing his sabre, and standing up in the stirrups, cried in a loud voice—

'Cowards! Would you dare to retreat? I'll cut down the first that turns back on me. Don't you hear by their shots there's not more than a dozen of them? After me! let your cry be "*Death to Yankee Abolitionists!*"'

'The same to traitors and rebels!' responded Devereux, as with sabre sloped and shining in the moonlight, he spurred boldly out into the road, followed by his artillerymen.

In ten seconds' time the opposing parties were face to face; and, after a rapid exchange of pistol-shots, came the clashing of sabres.

It would have been an unequal contest—twenty against more than twice the number, and the combatants on both sides equally brave. But the first volley from the artillerists, aimed with the advantage of an ambush, had thinned the ranks of the Confederates, and otherwise disconcerted them. When the strife came hand to hand, they fought feebly, and under a foreboding of defeat.

To this there was an exception—he who had pronounced the defiant speech, and led them on to the encounter. Mounted upon a powerful horse, he had shot far in front of his followers, and was looking for the leader of the opposing troop—as if the latter alone were worthy of his steel.

He had no difficulty in finding him; for Harry Devereux, as if stirred by a similar instinct, was searching for him!

Soon their horses, spurred to the charge, dashed against one another; recoiled from the shock; and then at the second meeting, the sabres of the riders, striking together, commenced their deadly play. And while sparks flew from both blades, that mocked the pale shimmer of the moon, their followers closed alongside in strife equally earnest.

The combatants, at first grouped together, soon spread into a wider circle, extending along the road and the broad waste that bordered it. Each with his own antagonist having enough to do, the leaders were left to themselves.

Between these, it was in reality a duel; a duel with sabres, and on horseback! And with deathlike earnestness was it fought; each so striving to kill the other that not a word was spoken between them.

All at once came a pause in the combat. Captain Devereux, hitherto fighting with his face to the moon, and under a disadvan-

tage, had spurred past his antagonist, and wheeling suddenly round, obtained the superior position. With his sabre drawn back for a stroke, he was about bringing it down on the shoulder of the Confederate officer, when his blow was stayed, as if his arm had been suddenly stricken with palsy!

The moonlight shining full upon his adversary's face told a terrible tale. *He was fighting with his own brother!*

'My God!' he gasped, 'Walter Devereux! Brother, is it you?'

'It is Walter Devereux,' cried the Confederate officer, 'but not your brother; nor the brother of any man who wears the Federal blue. Dismount and strip it off; or I shall hack it from you with my sword!'

'O Walter, dear Walter! do not talk thus! I cannot do as you say—I *will* not! Send your blade through my breast—I cannot kill you!'

'Cannot, cur! You could not if you tried. Walter Devereux was not born to be killed by a renegade to his country—least of all by a Yankee Abolitionist!'

'*I'm that same,*' shouted a man on horseback, who had suddenly spurred out from among the trees; and simultaneously with his shout came the report of a pistol.

For a moment the combatants with their horses were shrouded in smoke. When it drifted away, the officer in grey uniform was seen lying lifeless in the road; his horse going in a scared gallop through the trees, along with a score of others that carried riders upon their backs.

The fall of their leader had completed the panic of the Confederates; and those still in the saddle wheeling to the right about, went off in retreat. Besides a dozen or so killed, a like number

remained prisoners to the reconnoitring party.

Harry Devereux looked as if he, too, had received his death shot. Dropping down from his saddle, he staggered toward the spot where his brother's body lay, and bent over it with a heart full of agony. He had no need examining it, to tell him it was a corpse. A streak of moonlight slanting through a break between the branches, fell upon glazed eyes, and teeth set in the stern expression of death!

The Union soldiers, at the command of their beloved captain, gave the last rites of burial to the body of his brother. As they followed him back to camp, with hearts full of sympathy for his suffering, they looked more like men returning from a defeat than a victory.

* * *

In the summer of 1866 the fashionable watering-place of Newport, though no longer the resort

of so many rich Southerners, was crowded as of yore. The war had come to an end, and the weeping caused by it could not for ever endure. There was sorrow around many a desolate hearth, and in many a home for dear ones that were missing, tears still continued to flow. But the bereaved did not show themselves on the shores of Narraganset Bay, amidst the joy there abounding.

There were no signs of sadness in that spot where Adeline Winthrop first appeared with Walter Devereux. In the same piazza where she had received the two brothers—one now dead—she might have been seen with the one who survived seated by her side. He was no longer a simple lieutenant of artillery, but the commander of a division of the United States army.

And she was no longer Adeline Winthrop, but the wife of 'General Devereux.'



PAULINE LUCCA;

OR, THE WARLIKE ADVENTURES OF A PEACEABLE PRIMA DONNA.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF HOPP.

II.

BUT now, where was the sick man to be found? The whole place, almost, was transformed into a large hospital, and the ill-omened flag with the Geneva cross waved from every house. Madame Lucca made unremitting inquiries in the houses to the right and left, and at last, at the fifteenth, she received the answer:

'Lieutenant von Rhaden, severely wounded, on the first storey, room No. 9.'

'Severely wounded?' she exclaimed, and an inexpressible pang wrung her heart.

'We hope to bring him through,' said the physician, consolingly. 'Compose yourself, madame, all will still end well.'

'Will it do him any harm if he sees me come in suddenly?' she asked, in a troubled voice.

'I fear so,' replied the doctor. 'Both when he is awake and in the delirium of fever he is continually mentioning your name. Will you please follow me upstairs, and I will call you into the sick room after I have prepared him.'

She followed, and waited for a few minutes in the corridor; then the doctor opened the door and said:

'He is asleep; please come in softly!'

The singer entered, and looked for her beloved husband; but what a picture of misery was presented to her! In a small, close room stood a bed, about the size for a child, and upon it lay a

manly form at least six feet in height, with his legs hanging down over the foot of the bed, and his head and face almost entirely concealed by dressings and bandages; his mouth and nose were greatly swollen and the colour of lead.

'Is that my husband?' asked the singer, in a doubtful voice.

'It is Lieutenant von Rhaden,' the doctor answered.

She sank upon a chair, and covered her face with both hands.

'Madame,' said the doctor, softly, 'I should not have brought you here if your husband had not often told me that you were a woman of great fortitude.'

The singer stood up; her face was pale, but her expression was composed.

'My husband shall not be mistaken in me,' she said, and approached the bed.

'Adolphe,' she whispered.

'He is still asleep,' the doctor observed.

'But his eyes are wide open.'

'Only the left one; the sight of that eye has been injured by the bullet; he cannot close it, but can just move the eyelid a little; his left ear is deaf, and the left side of his mouth is powerless, as well as the whole of that side of his face.'

'And will it remain like that?'

The doctor shrugged his shoulders; 'We must hope for the best.'

'Pauline!' stammered the sick

man, speaking with difficulty, from the injury his tongue had received from the bullet.

'Please, madame, step behind the head of the bed,' said the doctor, low and quickly. 'Your husband may wake up any moment, and your sudden appearance might affect him too strongly.'

The sick man moved, and the doctor, placing himself by the bed, felt his patient's pulse.

'You have slept a long time, Baron; do you feel a little better for it?'

'Yes. I have had pleasant dreams.'

'Of your wife—you mentioned her name.'

'Yes, of my Pauline. I saw her, as if in reality, come up to my bed, and she cried, and said, "Adolphe!"'

'Suppose this dream should come true?' asked the doctor, to sound him.

'I should think that an angel had come down to me from heaven,' answered the sick man, with a mournful smile.

The wife could contain herself no longer. 'Adolphe!' she cried, in a voice choked with tears, and sank upon her knees at his bedside.

We will not further depict the scene of meeting. The physician had to control, to comfort, and to calm, and he succeeded at last in restoring tranquillity and even cheerfulness, by reminding Pauline how many there were who had been made far more unhappy by the war.

'May my husband have something to eat?' she asked the doctor. 'I have brought a case of preserved vegetables,' and she sighed involuntarily at the mention of this ill-omened case.

'Just now,' stammered the sick man, 'only coffee; coffee, coffee, nothing else.'

'Oh!' she exclaimed, quite cheerful again, 'I am mistress of the art of making coffee. You shall have the finest Mocha, just like what we have so often drunk together at Hiller's.'

The doctor had a coffee-pot brought at once, and in a quarter of an hour the coffee was ready, and (as Madame Lucca related with great satisfaction) the sick man made her give him five large cups of it.

Her next care was to find some airy rooms and soft beds, both for the invalid and for herself and maid.

The doctor told her that in the whole of Pont-à-Mousson there was only one house left in which she could find what she wanted; the owner, however, a French official, maintained that all in his house were ill, and kept it locked up.

At this, Madame Lucca jumped up with her old energy.

'What!' she exclaimed, 'shall the Frenchman be better off than my husband? In that case I need not have had a pass from Count Eulenburg!' And, seizing her hat and parasol, she turned towards the door.

'Adolphe, you shall soon have better quarters; I shall just speak a word in good German to the Frenchman—trust to me!' And away she rushed towards the house indicated to her.

After ringing long and violently, the door was opened.

A tall thin man in a flowered dressing-gown and night-cap confronted her.

'Monsieur,' she began, immediately, 'I require from you two airy rooms and three beds, as soft as possible.'

'Madame, ne comprends pas.'

'Ah, you do not understand German. Bon! très-bien! Then I will show you that the money

for my schooling was not thrown away when I learnt French.'

And now she made him understand, in the most correct French, that she would pay anything he might be barefaced enough to ask for the rooms and beds; but should he take it into his head to behave badly towards her, she would have him and all his belongings turned adrift on the spot.

As a proof of the power she possessed, she showed the owner of the variegated dressing-gown and night-cap the French side of Count Eulenburg's pass. This worked wonders. The Frenchman immediately gave in, and placed at the threatening lady's disposal two of the best rooms, with three soft downy beds. For this he certainly required an enormous sum, but Madame Lucca, who is distinguished for her liberality, counted out the shining fredericks without a remonstrance.

The sick man's change of abode took place on the same day that his energetic wife arrived, in company with her maid and the preserved vegetables.

'So you see, Adolphe,' said the wife, somewhat proudly, to her husband, who was sitting upright in his soft bed, 'that this benefit might not have fallen to your share if I had not understood a little bit of French.'

For ten whole days she nursed the sick man with true devotion, and, in spite of the terrible miasma produced by the suppuration of his wounds, she would not leave his bedside.

Each day the maid boiled and stewed a portion of the food she had brought, according to the doctor's directions, and, though the patient could only swallow nourishment in a liquid state, still his condition improved every day.

Madame Lucca had asked her

husband in a quiet hour for a full account of his being wounded, but the effort of speaking was so painful to him, that he referred her to a corporal of the name of Walter, who had stood by his side in the battle before Metz, and must know all the details better than he (von Rhaden) himself.

This corporal had been wounded in the leg, and was lying in the hospital von Rhaden had left.

One day, when the sick man was asleep, Madame Lucca sent to Corporal Walter, who could already get about with the help of a stick, to beg him to come to her, and the brave soldier willingly obeyed the summons.

We will here give the history as related by Corporal Walter himself.

'On the fifteenth of August,' he began, 'the French moved off from Metz upon the road to Verdun. They did not, however, get away as fast as they had expected, because the Germans threatened them on all sides. The Emperor could not have had much confidence in his escort, for, early on the sixteenth, he made off as fast as possible, by a circuit, to Chalons. It turned out lucky for him, as, about the middle of that day, we brought Bazaine's troops to a stand at Mars-la-Tour. The enemy's army held possession of two villages, an advanced work, and the heights hard by. "Chase the fellows away from those heights!" cried General von Stülpnagel. It was done after a hard fight. The French were driven away from the heights and also from the villages of Vionville and Flavigny, and our fellows fixed themselves firmly in them. At one o'clock, however, the enemy had occupied the wood of St. Arnould, with infantry and artillery, and from there they directed such a murderous fire upon the Bran-

denburgers that they fell like midges in the smoke. At half-past three o'clock H.R.H. Prince Frederick Charles appeared upon the field of battle, and rode along our ranks; the shells and chasseur bullets fell all about him and his staff, so that many of those near him were wounded. The Prince took the chief command as soon as he arrived. The artillery fight lasted until four o'clock, but then it was "Bayonets for the charge—double march!" We had only been waiting for that. "Hurrah!" sounded from thousands and thousands of voices, and, with fixed bayonets, we rushed straight upon the red-breeches. Ah! Madame, that was a spearing and hitting and stabbing! One might say, with Schiller, "It was a slaughter, and not a battle!" Lieutenant von Rhaden, your husband, was to be seen in the first rank, with his sword held aloft, regardless of the bullets which fell upon us like a storm of hailstones. He was always cheering us on with, "Don't give way, my brave fellows! We must have the wood before dusk!" I took such pride in his imposing heroic figure; when, suddenly, the lieutenant stopped short in the middle of the rush, his sword hand sank down, and he looked fixedly in one direction, without seeming to see any longer the murderous struggle going on all around. I at once suspected something wrong. I ran up to him quickly, and then saw how the blood was pouring down his cheek, from under the left eye.

"Herr Lieutenant!" I cried, and touched his arm. "You have had a shot in the face." But he did not hear me. He stood rooted there, looking up into the sky, and grasping his sword convulsively, as if ready to strike. I took hold of him gently, for I

thought every moment he must fall, and shouted to him, to vie with the thunder of the guns, "Herr Lieutenant, you are wounded!" Then slowly he turned his face towards me. Ah, madame, how his handsome manly countenance had been disfigured in a few seconds! After a short pause he spoke, but I could hardly understand him, for his tongue was torn and bleeding from the shot.

"Corporal Walter?"

"At your orders, Herr Lieutenant."

"I think I have had enough, Walter."

"I think so, indeed, Herr Lieutenant. The bullet has gone in under the left eye, and come out again on the right side, under the chin. It is a wound of the worst description! Have you any directions to send to your family? I will gladly take them."

"Take my watch and this diamond ring, give them both to my wife, and tell her—that my last thoughts——"

Here his senses left him; his head sank slowly down upon my shoulder, and I was obliged to exert all my strength to keep him upright. I called up two comrades, and, with their help, I carried him to a place where he was safe, at any rate, from horses' hoofs and cannon-wheels; here I laid my knapsack under his head, and covered him with my cloak. Then on I went again, and rushed upon the French with redoubled fury, and you may believe, madame, that I did not sprinkle the fellows with chocolate. By the time it was completely dark the battlefield and the victory were ours. As I thought it was all over, I went back as fast as I could to the place where we had left our wounded man; but, just as I was bending over him, a

curs— spent bullet catches me in the leg, and, as ill-luck would have it, I instantly fell down senseless at the feet of my supposed dead lieutenant.

'When I came to myself, I found I was in hospital, here at Pont-à-Mousson, under the care of the doctors, and, to my joy, I heard that Herr von Rhaden was under the same roof that I was, and out of danger. Many newspapers had already announced his death.

'For eight hours your honoured husband had lain upon the field of battle, amongst the killed and wounded, and I look upon it even now as a marvel that the hospital bearers found him still alive in spite of his severe wound.'

Here the corporal ended his story, to which Madame Lucca had been listening with breathless attention. At times she still had great fears for her husband.

The doctor, however, who had just entered, tranquillised her by the decided assurance that, at any rate, her husband's life was no longer in danger, and, with home nursing and care, he would soon recover his full strength.

When Walter had left, Madame Lucca asked the doctor:

'Is my husband awake?'

'No,' he answered, 'he is still sound asleep, and I have given orders to the medical assistant who is in charge to keep every one away; for undisturbed rest will do more to cure him than all the doctoring. And, in the first place, madame, I must beg you to keep away from the sick-room for three or four hours, and to leave your husband to my care.'

'I will cheerfully follow your orders, doctor; but, do you know, I am so entirely without occupation, that I find the scene of war very tedious. Have you nothing new to tell me?'

'By-the-bye,' said the doctor,

'a sanguinary cavalry fight took place about a mile from here yesterday; but the French, as usual, were repulsed with loss.'

'Can't I have a little look at the battle-field? My nerves are not so weak as you may think.'

'You can't well do that,' said the doctor, smiling. 'In the first place, no women are allowed there.'

'Are the sisters of mercy, then, not women?'

'That is different, Their vocation is to nurse the sick. You would scarcely obtain permission for the mere gratification of your curiosity.'

'Ah, dear doctor,' said Madame Lucca, with a deep sigh, 'you can't think what an ardent desire I have to see a battle-field near at hand. Besides, whenever I hear my husband groan, I am so full of fury against these French, that I want to rush upon them with a flaming sword, crying, "Vengeance for Pont-à-Mousson!" But does such a battle-field look very terrible?'

'So terrible that the mere description would make you shudder. The killed and wounded and dead horses lie everywhere; broken arms, helmets, and *képis* border the roads and cover the fields on each side, and the petards of our shells, which are scattered far and wide, bear witness to the devastating efficacy of our batteries.'

'I have seen something of what you describe on my journey here,' said Madame Lucca, with a slight shudder. 'But where did you go this morning with the soldiers?'

'I was with the troops who were going on guard at the extreme outposts on the heights. Up to yesterday there were still traces of the fury of the contest which has been fought out here; but now everything has been removed. One can see the French

képis with a good opera-glass, for they are only about 800 paces from our German outposts.'

'I have brought an opera-glass with me,' Madame Lucca quickly rejoined. 'I could inspect the French outposts with this glass. Do you know, doctor, where I can obtain permission to do so?'

'A permission to visit the outposts can only be obtained through Captain P——, of the Uhlans, who acts here as *etappen-commandant*.'

'Is that the privy-councillor who owns the great coal and iron works at Saarbrücken?'

'It is the same.'

'He is, you know, a two-fold millionaire.'

'Just so—in time of peace; in time of war he is a captain of Uhlans, and at the present moment *etappen-commandant* as well.'

'Where are his quarters?' she urged further.

'He has established himself in that house upon the hill.'

'Doctor, take care of my husband; before he is awake I shall have inspected the French *képis* from our German outposts. My maid may as well stay here—she has a timid soul. So the Commandant's quarters are there upon the hill? I shall beg him to give me a safe-conduct, and perhaps an escort as well.'

'I doubt——' began the Doctor.

'Ah, I will talk him round. *Au revoir*, good Doctor! Say nothing about it to my husband, for fear he should be uneasy. I shall be back again for coffee, and my maid shall have it ready. You will join us then and have a cup? *Addio onnore Dottore!*'

And she hurried forth to the above-mentioned Commandant's quarters, with the fleetness of a deer. The Doctor looked after her shaking his head, and said, smiling to himself, 'A thoroughly child-

like nature, but also the wilfulness of a child.'

The Commandant had just received a report from a cavalry patrol, bringing tidings of the preparations for battle round Sedan. An aide-de-camp had brought him orders to have the heights at Pont-à-Mousson keenly watched by outposts, and to prevent as much as possible any gathering of the scattered French at this point.

At this moment an orderly entered, and announced: 'Commandant, a lady from Berlin wishes to speak to you.'

'A visit from a lady?' asked the astonished Commandant, 'in this land of powder and shot? Didn't the lady give her name?'

'Madame von Rhaden—known also, she says, by the simpler name of "Pauline."'

'The Lucca!' exclaimed the Commandant, springing up quickly, to open the door himself.

'Madame,' he said, bowing at her entrance, 'I am astonished and at the same time delighted to receive you at my head-quarters. It was reported to me, some days ago, that you had arrived from Berlin, with the praiseworthy intention of taking your severely-wounded husband home; unfortunately, I have not yet had time to pay my respects to you.'

Saying this, the Commandant offered her a chair.

'If the mountain doesn't come to me, I go to the mountain, as Mahomet said; and so for once I act like a Turk,' returned the singer, gaily, as she seated herself.

'First of all, let me ask after your husband?'

'Thanks for your kind inquiry; he improves every day; still he is not so far restored as to be able to bear the journey home, but the physician predicts that he will be able to do so in a few days, and then I return with him.'

'Madame—but permit me first to ask how I may address you since your marriage? Madame von Rheaden?—Madame Lieutenant?—Madame la Baronne? or Madame?'

'Call me,' she said, with comic grandeur, 'simply and shortly, "Madame." It sounds well and also of importance. In the theatre bills I continue as Madame Lucca.'

'As you please, madame! What are our good people of Berlin doing?'

'They drink coffee, dine, sup and sleep before the Litsass columns, so as not to lose a second when a new despatch is posted up. But, not to detain you, I will inform you at once that I am come to you with a request.'

'If its accomplishment lies in my power, it is granted. May I ask?—'

'I only want to pay a little visit to the outposts, and see the French from them.'

The Commandant thought he had not heard aright.

'You want to go to the outposts?' he said, with a puzzled expression.

'Yes; only just whilst my husband is taking his necessary rest.'

'Madame, you cannot be in earnest! The theatre of war is essentially different from an opera house.'

'I know that well. In the theatre of war the chassepot bullets sing the soprano; the mitrailleuses rattle forth the baritone, and the shells growl the bass. It is a concert that I should like to hear for once; I can have Beethoven's Symphonies at home any day.'

'And suppose a bullet hits you?'

'Ah! that won't happen; the French bullets are too gallant. But please, Commandant, give me a pass, and a couple of Uhlans as well. I haven't much time, for at four o'clock I shall be expected for coffee, and then my husband will ask after me.'

'Madame, much as it grieves me, I cannot grant this request. I can never take the responsibility of such a dangerous step on your part.'

'Is that all? I will write down for you that I take all the responsibility upon my own head.'

And without further question, she seized a sheet of paper lying on the table, and wrote as she had promised, then handed the paper to the Commandant, with the words—

'Here you have a letter of indulgence; and, if that doesn't satisfy you, here is my pass, in which the Minister of the Interior requests all the authorities to execute my wishes to the utmost.'

'And I will willingly comply with this request; as for the rest, I yield rather to the force—'

'The force?'

'Of your charms.'

'They are but insignificant. Let us, then, go upon outpost duty.'

After the Commandant had given the singer a pass through the outposts, he ordered a sergeant and ten Uhlans to act as an escort for the prima donna. The cavalcade then started for the heights where the outposts were stationed.

It was the 30th of August, and the sun shot forth its most fiery rays, whilst Madame Lucca—holding her parasol in her right hand and her opera-glass in the left—stepped briskly along, humming a martial air from Figaro's 'Hochzeit.'

The Uhlans trotted gaily behind her, and in about half an hour the party arrived, through ditches and hedges, at the first line of outposts, where the men had entrenched themselves in the ground, like moles, to get some protection from the enemy's bullets.

At the first burrow, near to which the 'pleasure-party' stopped, some Saxons were posted. One of

them regarded the pretty lady with great curiosity, imagining that she held up her parasol to catch the bullets as they fell, and at last broke out with the words—

‘Donnerwetter! If the wives in Prussia are so courageous, it is no wonder that the husbands of these Amazons are always beating the Frenchmen black and blue!’

The singer replied, in purest Austrian,

‘You haven’t made a good hit, hero from Saxony! I am no Prussian, but a born Austrian,—certainly a Prussian as well, from inclination, but out-and-out a genuine and true German.’

Whilst upon the road to the outposts, a few bullets had whizzed across ‘from over there,’ but all had gone high above their heads. Now, however, the French seemed to have taken the spot where the little group was standing as a settled point of aim, for the shot came thicker and faster, and one of the Uhlan’s flags was torn from its lance.

‘What is going on?’ asked Madame Lucca.

The sergeant galloped up, gave a military salute, and reported—

‘Madame la Baronne, if I keep my Uhlans here another quarter of an hour, I shan’t take one sound man back. The French can endure the sight of everything else, but never an Uhlan’s flag; if one shows itself, they expend a gigantic amount of ammunition.’

At this moment his charger reared, for a shot passed close by its ear.

‘For mercy’s sake,’ exclaimed the singer, in horror, ‘let no man’s life be endangered on my account! Go back, gentlemen, and ride home at a gallop. I return my best thanks to the Commandant.’

She had not to repeat her wish. The Uhlans, who had received orders from the Commandant to

obey the lady in everything, started off like a gust of wind, and had soon vanished from sight. After their departure the firing soon ceased.

Madame Lucca now strolled on fearlessly, looking around her to the right and left, and before long reached one of the extreme outposts. Here she saw the solitary stump of a tree, shattered by bullets, and, being somewhat tired, took possession of it as an armchair.

A Forty-eighth man, of genuine Berlin extraction, who was stationed here, had been watching the solitary figure for some minutes in great astonishment. At last he left his earth-cover and approached the lady, whose only weapon was an opera-glass.

‘Madame,’—he began his inquiries, ‘what do you want here?’

‘I want, just for once, to learn something of the trade of war on the spot,’ she answered, without the slightest embarrassment.

‘H’m!’ growled the soldier, and continued: ‘Just look at the trunk of a tree on which you are sitting.’

‘I did look at it, before I sat down.’

‘How do you think it got so shattered?’

‘I think it must have been done by the enemy’s bullets,’ she answered, with complete unconcern.

‘And yet you sat down upon it!’

‘I should have preferred a sofa, if one had been at hand.’

This made an impression upon the Forty-eighth man.

‘As you are so courageous,’ he said, in his strong soldier’s voice, ‘*You shall have some plums!*’

At these words, he thrust his hand into his newly-washed bread-wallet, and brought out a handful of the most beautiful yellow plums, which he threw into the singer’s lap.

‘Many thanks!’ said the lady,

smiling, and was just going to try one of the plums, when the soldier shouted—

‘Bomb!—Stoop!’

Instead of stooping, however, she looked up at the sky, and asked, curiously, ‘Where then?’

At that moment a shell burst about a hundred paces from her seat.

‘Now,’ the soldier said, emphatically, ‘I should advise you to make away from here as fast as possible; the French seem to be aiming at you, probably to take revenge for the Duke of Magenta’s ladies who were molested by some of our hussars.’

‘Besides, I have learnt enough about the trade of war,’ returned the singer, ‘and I will go back to the town; but you must first grant me one request.’

‘And what is it?’

‘I should like to have a couple of splinters from the shell which burst near me, to take home with me as a remembrance of this hour.’

‘Shell splinters? You shall have them!’ said the Forty-eighth man; and in less than ten minutes he brought her some cautiously-collected fragments of the shell in a *bonbonnière*, and presented them to the expectant lady with knightly courtesy (and Madame Lucca showed them to the writer of these lines with a triumphant countenance). On her return to Pont-à-Mousson she overheard a soldier saying, half-aloud:

‘Fritz—she is bomb-proof! She is a witch!’

Her husband, who had awoke in the meanwhile, was expecting her with feverish anxiety.

‘Already awake, husband?’ she asked, entering with childish unconcern.

‘But, Pauline——’ said the sick man, beginning his sermon.

She interrupted him quickly.

‘Dear Adolphe! your tongue is

still bad, and the Doctor says, you know, that you must spare it;—isn’t it so, Doctor?’

‘Yes—yes!’ he answered, laughing. ‘But just think, Madame, what a jubilee would have broken out in Paris if a despatch had appeared, announcing, “The Germans have no longer a Lucca, or the Berliners a Pauline: we have shot her dead, out of revenge!”’

‘Yes, Lina——’ continued Von Raden.

She again interrupted him quickly, with the words,

‘You will get toothache, Adolphe, —you must take care! The maid shall bring coffee directly. Edith! —coffee!’ she called out; and the invalid made no further attempt to continue his lecture, all the more that he knew beforehand it would be useless; for whatever ‘Paulinchen’ once resolved to do she went through with it, even at the risk of her life.

Some days later we find Lieutenant von Rhaden, well wrapped up and carefully bandaged, on the return journey to Berlin with his wife and her maid. The preserved vegetables had, fortunately, been consumed at Pont-à-Mousson, and the case which contained them had been burnt to ashes,

A Berlin banker, who met Madame Lucca at Mannheim, and asked what had taken her there in such dangerous times, received for answer:

‘I have been to the scene of war to fetch my old man home, to nurse him as a sister of mercy, and make him well all the quicker!’

Four months after the events here narrated, Madame Lucca became the happy mother of a lovely little daughter, who, after these warlike adventures, may well have brought with her into the world something of the character of the Maid of Orleans.

THE TALK OF THE TOWN.

I DON'T think that by nature I am given to grumble—or, at all events, I do not grumble more than a free-born Englishman is entitled to do. As a rule, I take things easily, and am inclined to contemplate the sunshine rather than the fogs of life. I like to make the best of things, and not the worst. I do my best to see only the better nature of my fellow beings, remembering continually that I have weaknesses of my own. I do not think I am given to complaining without reason, and therefore I have no hesitation in saying that the railway arrangements of our native land are not altogether what they ought to be. I am so far a lucky traveller that I never yet lost my luggage, at home or abroad, and consequently have not yet had the opportunity of writing to the 'Times,' much as I should like to occupy the attention of the great creatures who preside over the correspondence of the leading journal. But I do desire, not only on behalf of 'London Society,' but of travelling society in general, to raise my protest against the existing directorial belief that passengers—wretched tourists though they be—can travel five hundred miles without at least ten minutes for refreshment. I speak from the experience of a recent journey from London to Aberdeen. Ladies and gentlemen, I beg to assure you—if, indeed, you yourselves have not shared my experience—that we were only allowed five minutes at Carlisle, and ten at Perth. Now, I really do not think that travellers are such worthless creatures that their comforts are not to be taken a little into consideration. The interior of an English railway carriage is not so entirely

abandoned to charms and luxury that the occupants never desire to leave it for a moment, and only quit it when they are compelled to, at their destination, with sorrow and regret. Even when travelling by the Limited Mail, a leg-rest and a cushion scarcely come up to 'beds of asphodel;' in fact, nobody outside Colney Hatch would travel at night for the mere enjoyment of the thing. Then, why may we not be permitted to pause occasionally on a long journey, just to take breath and a little substantial nourishment, and make oneself tolerably comfortable generally? The sense of hurry that pervades one at an English railway station is almost suffocating.

'Guard, how long do we stay here?'

'Only four minutes, sir.'

'Well, but "Bradshaw" says ten.'

'Dare say he does, sir; but "Bradshaw" isn't in charge of this train, and I am. Look sharp, sir, if you want to get out.'

How can I look sharp after the guard's brilliant repartee? Oh, that the author of 'Happy Thoughts' were with me, to shut that guard up, and to detain the station-master with an argument on the Typical Developments of the shrill boys employed by Mr. W. H. Smith. My wish is vain; I am alone, and stupid; two minutes are wasted by my indecision, and then my nervous fear of being left behind prevents me from utilising the remaining two. And so we go on through the journey. Now, why in the world should this be thus? They do this sort of thing better on the continent, and do not compel the traveller to lay in a supply

of flabby sandwiches, which are usually the most unpleasant article of food, and invariably provoke nausea and indigestion. Why may not passengers from London to Edinburgh be allowed twenty minutes' halt half way? Swindon, between London and Bristol, evidently contemplated great things originally; but its gorgeous saloons are simply tantalising, as is its boiling soup. I recollect one determined traveller carrying his soup-plate bodily off with him, smiling serenely at the screeching waiters; and I have thought since of an ingenious parody of 'Lord Ullin's Daughter,' written by a friend [of mine, the last verse of which ran—

'But no; the loup-guard locked the door,
Return or aid preventing;
The porters scoff, the train went off,
And they were left lamenting.'

Lines highly applicable to the interesting occasion.

But the British Public is a long-suffering animal. Its patience is great, and its perseverance slow. Our grandchildren may, perhaps, in happy times to come, cross the channel in comparative comfort, and separate lines for the conduct of goods traffic may eventually permit passenger-trains to proceed in peace, give the ticket-holders time to allay the pangs of hunger, and relieve the daily papers of their monotonous accounts of 'serious collisions.'

One word more. Is there any inexorable law which prevents railway companies from providing sleeping-cars? People do not, as a rule, take their night's rest in uncomfortable arm-chairs, and if they have to travel by night, there is, as far as I am aware, no good reason why they should not have proper accommodation, without having to pay heavily for the luxury of a saloon carriage. The fact is not simply astonishing—it

is absolutely overwhelming—that in clever times like these, no better class of railway carriages has been invented, as far as my painful experience goes, for the night travellers. There are three great competing lines for the northern traffic; let me suggest that one of these should speculate a little in cars differently arranged from the universally existing type, and I will undertake to say that it will reap a rich harvest, and will have the satisfaction of offering a grand example, which the other lines will be compelled to follow. The shareholders need not be alarmed at the prospect of having to provide new rolling-stock. The improvement of property is not usually found to be a bad investment.

Is it any use saying anything about the fare usually provided for hungry voyagers at railway buffets in this happy country of ours? Is it any good to raise a protest against the horrible ham sandwiches, the mummy chickens, the gorging buns, the fearful pies, the clammy pastry, the beastly sherry, the poisonous brandy, which are usually presented for the delectation of our craving interior economy? Hopeful of the progressive improvement of the world as I am, nothing can lift me from the regions of despair when contemplating the staring and audacious sign which would inveigle me into the 'Refreshment Room.' 'Not there, not there, my child!' Present not yourself before those syrens with magnificent heads of hair and slender waists, that, simpering behind the changeless counter, would press their deleterious wares upon you. Take care! beware! She is fooling thee. That 'Celebrated Melton Pie' will make itself remembered in hours of agonies if you presume upon it; that ham sandwich, what know

you of the history of the pig to which the meat portion originally belonged? The bread—do not eat it, but send it to the South Kensington Museum, as a caution. The wine—drink it if you dare. The sponge-cakes—well, if you like sponge, and it agrees with you, try two or three. The tea or coffee that is poured through a tap from that imposing plated vessel—if you want an emetic, ‘drink, pretty creature, drink.’ I decline going through the sickening details. Messrs. Spiers and Pond, I beg to assure you that I have always found your refreshment-bars the best. Mind you, that is not a very high compliment; but if a reformation is to be made in the restaurant department of our railway stations, I believe you are the people to do it. Now, go in, and win.

I have alluded to what are popularly known as ‘the horrors of the middle passage,’ that is to say, crossing the channel. I do not suppose the good humour of mankind has ever been subjected to a severer test than in the nuisances one meets with in getting from England to France and back again. The wise men of Gotha, who put to sea in a bowl, probably desired to satirise the mail and tidal packets with which most of us are so distressingly familiar. The Talk of the Town is now chattering about the hanging machinery which is being constructed in a novel vessel, and which promises to make us enjoy the crossing from Dover to Calais. All I can say is, that if the contrivance proves to be successful, no public reward can be too great for the glorious inventor. If the year of grace, eighteen hundred and seventy-three, witnesses such a triumph of skill, it will be the *annus mirabilis* of our generation.

As events pass so very quickly now-a-days, and a nine days’ wonder is forgotten before it is a week old, so the Geneva Arbitration will have become a matter of history by the time these pages appear in print. It will be interesting for our descendants some half century hence, to compare the language of the then historian with the leading articles of our present daily journals. May we indeed believe that a new era has dawned upon civilization, and that the first substantial signs have been given of a gentle *rapprochement* between the lion and the lamb, and of the possibility of their lying down together in peace? May we indulge in the pleasant hope that inventive faculties may soon be turned to some more humane and useful purpose than perfecting ‘Woolwich Infants’ and destructive projectiles? May we really think that the time is not far distant when soldiers will be regarded as butchers, and the art of war as the crime of elaborated murder? May we cherish the dawning hope that the great Christian precept by which we all profess to be governed, ‘Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,’ is beginning to assert its force, and to bring the blush of shame upon its full-mouthed professors, when they are about to boast of Alma, Solferino, Sadowa, Sedan, and Paris? Alas! Principle and Practice are still so widely sundered—Theory is as shadowy as Theology, because theorists and theologians *will* live in a world of their own, and continually suffer their passions to overcome their reason.

Does any one believe that the tribunal of Geneva is likely to become a substitute for the appeal to arms? Does any citizen flatter himself that henceforth he may build his barns and store his warehouse undisturbed, in the calm

conviction that wars shall cease in all the world, and that international disputes and proud ambition will for evermore be submitted, in meek humility, to some half dozen respectable gentlemen, constituting, for the time being, a Supreme Court of Appeal, whose decision it is impossible to challenge? One or two of our daily journals have gushed over in the fulness of their admiration of what has recently been done by Count Sclopis and his colleagues, as if the result of the Alabama Claims had not been a foregone conclusion from the moment of the ratification of the Treaty of Washington. Suppose the award in favour of America had been thirty millions, instead of three and a quarter—nay, suppose it had even been thirteen—would not the British tax-payer have felt that the whole arbitration scheme had been much better left alone, and we might as well have taken our chance of war, knowing, as we do, that it is not the interest of our cousins on the other side of the Atlantic to fight us, any more than it is our interest to fight them? However, as it happens, the experiment has been successful. The payment we have to make will give the Chancellor of the Exchequer a good excuse for not permitting any relaxation in our burdens by reason of his surplus revenue; and we may be thankful that, as far as we can see at present, the income-tax is not likely to be increased by sixpence in the pound. Still, we should be the happier if we could feel convinced that the arbitration on the Alabama Claims were indeed firmly established as an honest precedent, for then each government that honestly intended to abide by it would be extremely careful about being the first to declare war. France appears to have but little practical

difficulty in paying her fine to Germany, but if Prince Bismarck had waited and formally laid his claims before an arbitration tribunal, would France, considering the fact that she declared war without the shadow of a reason, have been subjected to a lesser penalty? This is worth consideration.

But the progressive civilization of Christendom has good reason to hope, irrespective of international law, that the barbaric custom of settling ambitious claims by force of arms has well-nigh run its course. The leading minds of the German Empire have, by some strange process of antagonism, challenged the advance of education, philosophy, and commerce, by proclaiming it as a great military power, and startling Europe by the numerical strength of its military hosts. What is the result? The tide of emigration swells month by month. The mechanic and labouring classes in a country where education has been laudably encouraged by generations of wise statesmen are slow to see any advantage to themselves and to their business in spending the best years of their lives in military training. The complicated mysteries of diplomacy are nothing to them. Their business is to raise themselves above the stratum of society in which they find themselves by the accident of birth, and the profession of arms is unquestionably the profession of a small minority. They can understand a revolution against a tyranny, or the establishment of a commune by down-trodden masses; but to give their lives because their superiors in rank choose to quarrel about an appointment to a foreign throne is more than they can tolerate, and they would forego their nationality rather than submit to such a purposeless sacrifice.

The government of the German Emperor feels itself constrained to warn the subjects in the most emphatic manner against emigration, and positively goes so far as to threaten them with outlawry. The moral of this fact is overwhelming. The common sense of thews and sinews even is against gigantic armaments; and it may not be long before the 'people' may declare, with unmistakable emphasis, that if kings and emperors desire to fight, they must do it in single combat. If the present emigration from Germany, and the Arbitration of Geneva, tend to convince the world of this, mankind will certainly be none the worse.

As to the meeting of the three Emperors at Berlin in September, I regard it as a matter of the most perfect indifference. There was a great deal of theatrical display about it, no doubt; but we are tolerably well used to red fire and sensation scenes in these days, and we take them for what they are worth. We decline to believe that three gentlemen can settle the destinies of Europe in private conversation in the course of a few days; and we may comfort ourselves by the assurance that though 'Emperor' is a very fine title, it doesn't mean much. The Emperor of Germany is not the Emperor of the Germans yet. We talk of the British Empire, and the Imperial Parliament. How astonished we should be if Her most gracious Majesty, whom God preserve! took upon her the title of Empress! But she is, I believe, called the Empress of India. Would a loyal subject, like myself—the Free Lance family were always Conservative, see History *passim*—be thought very presumptuous if he'd venture to suggest that H. R. H. the Prince of Wales would do well if he tra-

velled in state through that marvellous country which is the envy of European potentates? In spite of all our Republican talk, and our boasts that we do not care for the show and pomp of majesty, even we in England do like it very much when we can get it, and we may be quite sure that it would be fully appreciated in the East. Perhaps Mr. Grant Duff will kindly turn his attention to this matter, and suggest it in the proper quarter before he makes his next statement on Indian affairs. Let me add the hope that in future that statement will be made earlier in the session, and that honourable members will think it worth their while to be present and listen to it, for it is a disgrace and shame to the legislature that the House is not crowded upon so important an occasion.

Talking of the East reminds me of dancing dervishes. This naturally brings to my mind the subject of dancing generally. At the close of the last season in London the complaint was raised, that young gentlemen did not appear to care for balls, and that when they did assist at the Terpsichorean revels, they usually preferred dancing with the young married women, and left the virgins to bloom unplucked beside the dear old wallflowers. Now, I cannot say that I am much surprised at this. In the first place, dancing in the ordinary London ball-room is not a pleasant or a healthy exercise. I am to dance! To dance! horrible notion! I have dined—luxuriously, probably—and I am expected to dance! That is, I am to run quickly round a room to the sound of music, with my arm round a young lady's waist. How infinitely I should prefer to sit quietly upon a sofa

with my arm round the same young lady's waist—what a pleasant quarter of an hour we might have! But this would not be proper. The rules of society permit me to hold her very tight, so long as we are running about; but 'hands off!' when we sit down. I won't stop to consider this, for applied logic often leads to most inconvenient results. Let us regard dancing in the abstract. It is a healthy and amusing exercise; it gives scope for the exhibition of skill, and it is lively for the lookers-on. But regard it in its conventional aspect, and its charms are gone. A hot and crowded room—a squeeze and a worry, as it is sometimes not inaptly called; bumps and treading upon corns; tearing of dresses, and perpetual anxiety about getting the next partner, to whom one is engaged, in time. And then—ball-room conversation! Good gracious! what nonsense it generally is. Let me give a fair sample:

He. Been to the opera often?

She. Covent Garden, or Drury Lane?

He. Oh, Covent Garden, of course.

She. Only twice as yet.

He. Very hot, isn't it?

She. Dreadfully.

He. I can't think why people, when they give balls, can't provide proper ventilation.

She. More can I. But all the windows are open.

He. So they are. But they ought to manage better.

She. So they ought.

He. Are you going on to the Duchess of Smithfield's?

She. Yes—are you?

He. Yes—I think so. Shall we take another turn?

She. If you like.

And away they start, colliding with other couples all over the room. Well—if He and She are

happy in so doing, I do not know that any moral police force need be called in to interfere at present, though I have heard medical men deplore the sad effects of continual late hours and vitiated atmosphere upon the constitutions of young girls; and I have seen them shake their heads sorrowfully over a pallid bride, whom a course of London seasons had rendered utterly unfit for domestic duties and trials.

'But why 'won't the men come to balls as they ought to,' exclaims mamma; 'and when they are there' why do they prefer the society of the young married ladies?' My dear madam, I will try and satisfy your curiosity, though it seems to me that the answers are very plain. Balls are not given now-a-days for the purposes of dancing; but usually they are provided as obligations which certain members of society owe to other members. Society requires that its wealthy constituents should throw open their salons and provide refreshments of a certain kind, and invite the units that compose the social throng, place certain musical performers at one end of a room, and persuade males and females to jostle each other till two or three o'clock in the morning. Now, this sort of thing ceases to be amusing after one or two experiments. Young men do not care to go to balls unless they expect to be amused; and all these entertainments are cursed with an inexorable uniformity. Dancing is out of the question; a man might as well be expected to pirouette on the point of a needle as to dance comfortably in a London ball-room. Besides, it is too ridiculous to call walking through a quadrille, or ambling through a set of lancers, or shuffling about in a waltz, *dancing*. You might as well call hopeless stammering fluent oratory. Conversation, too,

is almost impossible. Conversation implies thought, a certain sparkling brilliancy, and power of condensation of speech—but such growth is not favoured by the atmosphere of ball-rooms. In point of fact, my dear madam, we are apt to be *bored* by balls of the season, and boredom is absolutely fatal to enjoyment and the power of making oneself agreeable, and when we receive the well-known card we are inclined to say with Mr. Merivale's 'Son of the Soil'—

'Duchess, your drawing-rooms are not for me!'

And we prefer talking to the married ladies. Well, dear madam, *you* should not complain of this. Besides, we have some regard for our reputation. Experience soon teaches us that, if we chance upon a pleasant and agreeable young lady, we have to be careful how we indulge in her society, or we may become the talk of the town, and find ourselves engaged to be married long before we are aware of it. Now, we can converse agreeably with young married women without the slightest feeling of constraint. We are not the least afraid of their husbands being such fools as to be jealous; and I can assure you that the vast majority of us have not the least desire of figuring in the Divorce Court. No doubt we are, many of us, marriageable men; but you must forgive us for saying that we may well be pardoned if we feel ourselves compelled seriously to consider if your usual method of bringing up your daughters, madam, is calculated to make them good wives. We would not wrong them for the world; but if their extravagant habits in dress and perpetual pleasure-seeking 'give us cause,' the blame must rest with you, and not with us. We altogether decline to take

your responsibilities upon our shoulders.

Talking of marriage reminds me of a queer little pamphlet I have recently received, and which appears to be circulated gratuitously, entitled, 'The Law of Husband and Wife.' As flitting straws are said to denote the quarter whence the wind blows, so perhaps these small print pages may be taken as heralding forth some growing opposition on the part of men to the cry for women's rights. The author of this brochure evidently thinks that women's rights are men's wrongs, and he is eloquent accordingly. The advertisement to the second edition is so rich, that it deserves to be quoted.

'The chief objects of this pamphlet are to show: (1) The great amount of injustice which husbands in the main, and more particularly among the poorer classes, suffer from the partial decisions of magistrates, county court, and other judges, &c. (2) The spurious nature of the outcry on property grievances raised by the Married Women's Rights agitators. (3) The substantial nature of the grievances of husbands regarding their property—all liable to have it stolen from them by their wives, and, in point of fact, liable for all the debts the wives may please to contract. (4) Other grievances of married men as fathers of families, such as the ability of their wives to thwart them in their plans of giving the children suitable education, &c. (5) That, as a rule, women are not held responsible for any offences they may commit; consequently, the married state is now made so intolerable for husbands, that single men who reflect upon the subject must increasingly be deterred from contracting matrimony. The door, therefore, is left open for vice, immorality, and improvidence. (6) The necessity

of the appointment of some tribunal, such as a Royal Commission, to revise the entire system of Law of Husband and Wife.'

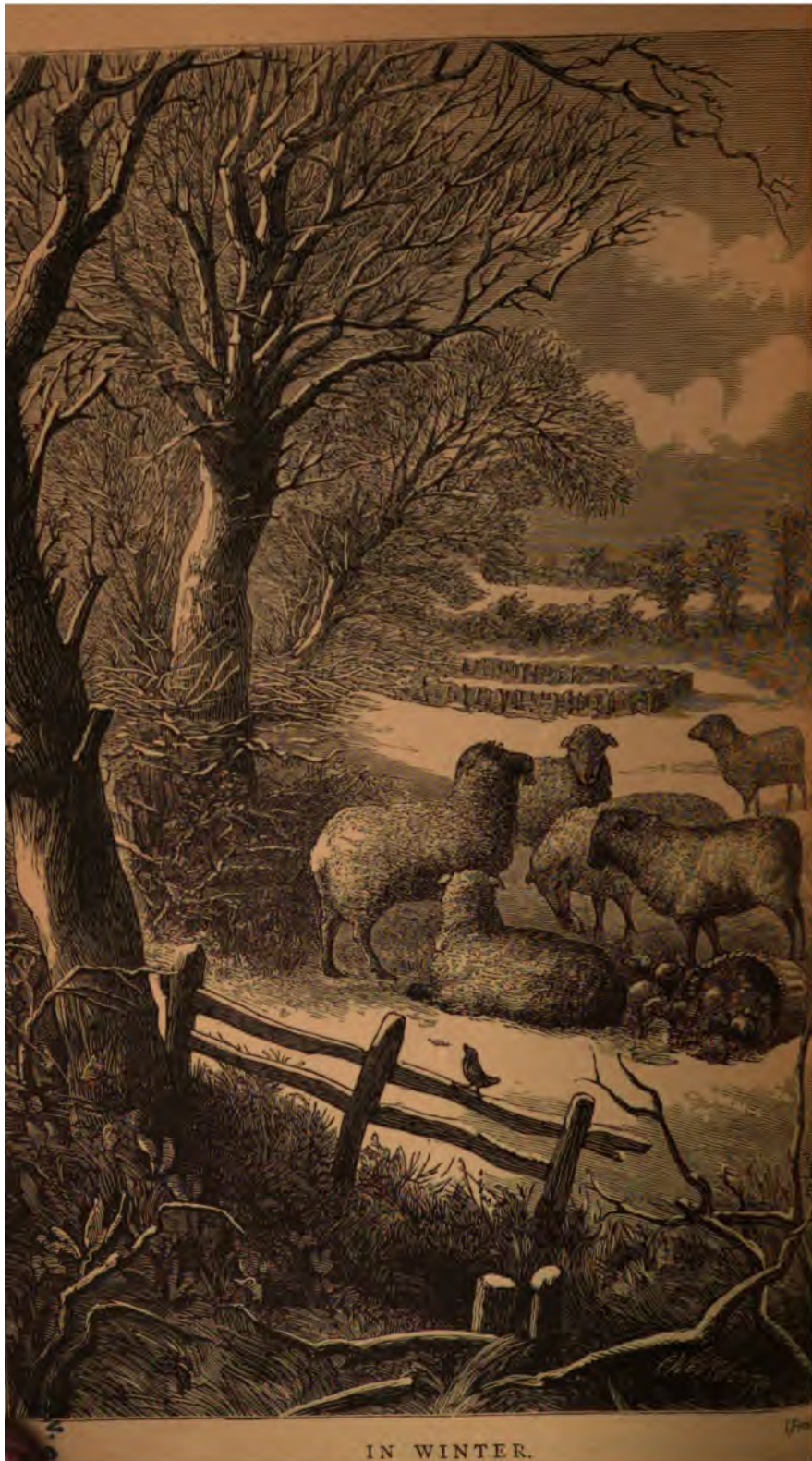
The author of this small work speaks so feelingly, and is evidently so much in earnest, and writing from bitter experience, that we cannot but entertain feelings of the greatest compassion for his unhappy lot. But pity the lot of the Royal Commissioners appointed to inquire into the 'Law of Husband and Wife,' with full power to examine witnesses! The painful revelations of the Divorce Court would be as nothing beside the domestic earthquakes that would instantly explode. As a student at the bar in the days of Sir Cresswell Cresswell, I perfectly remember the impression produced on me by a wife's account of the way in which her husband pulled her back-hair down (tore off her chignon, I presume), and pursued herself and her mother upstairs, flourishing the kitchen-poker. I do not know how the case eventually terminated; but the introduction of the mother-in-law element disposed me to believe that the miscreant husband was probably more sinned against than sinning. I should not be at all surprised to hear that he is the author of the gentle work now lying before me. The proposed Royal Commission might unravel many such domestic mysteries as this. But its great difficulty in framing its ultimate report would be found in the almost impossibility of getting at the truth hidden somewhere in the mean between sorely-tried wives and exasperated

husbands. And the ladies might fairly say, that unless a jury of matrons were impanelled to try their case, or unless a good proportion of Peeresses or Members' wives sat upon the Commission, it would be impossible for down-trodden women to get an impartial hearing.

The fact is, the author of this pamphlet, evidently a suffering man, is too much inclined to judge all cases by his own. He forgets that when two persons marry they take each other for better or for worse, and they must abide by the terms of the contract. An easy law of divorce, or any legal arrangement modifying the several mutual responsibilities of husband and wife, would afford the greatest inducements to improvident unions, and infinitesimally diminish the penalties of conjugal infidelity. Home would soon become an old-world term, and the sweetest charm of life would vanish; the relationship between child and parent would be altogether altered; and, instead of progressive civilization, we should find ourselves going back to the days of mere brute instinct. To legislate for exceptional cases is well known to be a great political error, and it would be as wildly wrong to make laws now in favour of the husband as in favour of the wife. Persistent *doctrinaires* will always exist, and their very persistence will occasionally persuade more sensible men to let them have their way, for the sake of peace. But a Nemesis is sure to come.

FREE LANCE.





IN WINTER.

LONDON SOCIETY.

DECEMBER, 1872.

A SIMPLETON.

A Story of the Day.

BY CHARLES READE.

[At the Author's particular request this story is not illustrated.]

CHAPTER VII.

CHRISTOPHER STAINES came back, looking pained and disturbed. 'There,' said he, 'I feared it would come to this. I have quarrelled with Uncle Philip.'

'Oh! how could you?'

'He affronted me.'

'What about?'

'Never you mind. Don't let us say anything more about it, darling. It is a pity, a sad pity—he was a good friend of mine once.'

He paused, entered what had passed, in his diary, and then sat down, with a gentle expression of sadness on his manly features. Rosa hung about him, soft and pitying, till it cleared away, at all events for the time.

Next day they went together to clear the goods Rosa had purchased. Whilst the list was being made out in the office, in came the fair-haired boy, with a ten-pound note in his very hand. Rosa caught sight of it, and turned to the auctioneer, with a sweet, pitying face: 'Oh! sir, surely you will not take all that money from him, poor child, for a rickety old chair.'

The auctioneer stared with amazement at her simplicity, and

said, 'What would the vendors say to me?'

She looked distressed, and said, 'Well, then, really we ought to raise a subscription, poor thing!'

'Why, ma'am,' said the auctioneer, 'he isn't hurt: the article belonged to his mother and her sister; the brother-in-law isn't on good terms; so he demanded a public sale. She will get back four pun ten out of it.' Here the clerk put in his word. 'And there's five pounds paid, I forgot to tell you.'

'Oh! left a deposit, did he?'

'No, sir. But the laughing Hyena gave you five pounds at the end of the sale.'

'The laughing Hyena, Mr. Jones?'

'Oh! beg pardon: that is what we call him in the room. He has got such a curious laugh.'

'Oh! I know the gent. He is a retired doctor. I wish he'd laugh less, and buy more: and he gave you five pounds towards the young gentleman's arm-chair! Well, I should as soon have expected blood from a flint. You have got five pounds to pay, sir: so now the chair will cost your

mamma ten shillings. Give him the order and the change, Mr. Jones.'

Christopher and Rosa talked this over in the room whilst the men were looking out their purchases. 'Come,' said Rosa; 'now I forgive him sneering at me; his heart is not really hard, you see.' Staines, on the contrary, was very angry. 'What! he cried, 'pity a boy who made one bad bargain, that, after all, was not a very bad bargain; and he had no kindness, nor even common humanity, for my beautiful Rosa, inexperienced as a child, and buying for her husband, like a good, affectionate, honest creature, amongst a lot of sharpers and hard-hearted cynics—like himself.'

'It was cruel of him,' said Rosa, altering her mind in a moment, and half inclined to cry.

This made Christopher furious. 'The ill-natured, crotchety, old—the fact is he is a misogynist.'

'Oh, the wretch!' said Rosa, warmly. 'And what is that?'

'A woman-hater.'

'Oh! is that all? Why, so do I—after that Florence Cole. Women are mean, heartless things. Give me men; they are loyal and true.'

'All of them?' inquired Christopher, a little satirically. 'Read the papers?'

'Every soul of them,' said Mrs. Staines, passing loftily over the proposed test. 'That is, all the ones I care about; and that is my own, own one.'

Disagreeable creatures to have about one—these simpletons!

Mrs. Staines took Christopher to shops, to buy the remaining requisites: and in three days more the house was furnished, two female servants engaged, and the couple took their luggage over to the Bijou.

Rosa was excited and happy at

the novelty of possession, and authority, and that close sense of house proprietorship which belongs to woman. By dinner-time she could have told you how many shelves there were in every cupboard, and knew the Bijou by heart in a way that Christopher never knew it. All this ended, as running about and excitement generally does, with my lady being exhausted, and lax with fatigue. So then he made her lie down on a little couch, while he went through his accounts.

When he had examined all the bills carefully he looked very grave, and said, 'Who would believe this? We began with 3,000*l.* It was to last us several years—till I got a good practice. Rosa, there is only 1,440*l.* left.'

'Oh, impossible!' said Rosa. 'Oh, dear! why did I ever enter a sale-room?'

'No, no, my darling; you were bitten once or twice, but you made some good bargains too. Remember there was 400*l.* set apart for my life policy.'

'What a waste of money!'

'Your father did not think so. Then the lease; the premium; repairs of the drains that would have poisoned my Rosa; turning the coach-house into a dispensary; painting, papering, and furnishing; china, and linen, and everything to buy. We must look at this seriously. Only 1,440*l.* left. A slow profession. No friends. I have quarrelled with Uncle Philip: you with Mrs. Cole; and her husband would have launched me.'

'And it was to please her we settled here. Oh, I could kill her: nasty cat!'

'Never mind; it is not a case for despondency, but it is for prudence. All we have to do is to look the thing in the face, and be very economical in everything. I had



Drawn by H. Johnson-J

WILLIE BLAKE

better give you an allowance for housekeeping; and I earnestly beg you to buy things yourself whilst you are a poor man's wife, and pay ready money for everything. My mother was a great manager, and she always said, "There is but one way: be your own market-woman, and pay on the spot; never let the tradesmen get you on their books, or, what with false weight, double charges, and the things your servants order that never enter the house, you lose more than a hundred a year by cheating."

Rosa yielded a languid assent to this part of his discourse, and it hardly seemed to enter her mind; but she raised no objection; and in due course he made her a special allowance for house-keeping.

It soon transpired that medical advice was to be had, gratis, at the Bijou, from eight till ten, and there was generally a good attendance. But a week passed, and not one patient came of the class this couple must live by. Christopher set this down to what people call 'the Transition period:' his Kent patients had lost him; his London patients not found him. He wrote to all his patients in the country, and many of his pupils at the university, to let them know where he was settled: and then he waited.

Not a creature came.

Rosa bore this very well for a time, so long as the house was a novelty; but, when that excitement was worn out, she began to be very dull, and used to come and entice him out to walk with her: he would look wistfully at her, but object, that, if he left the house, he should be sure to lose a patient.

'Oh! they won't come any more for our staying in — tiresome things!' said Rosa.

But Christopher would kiss her, and remain firm. 'My love,' said he, 'you do not realize how hard a fight there is before us. How should you? You are very young. No, for your sake, I must not throw a chance away. Write to your female friends: that will while away an hour or two.'

'What, after that Florence Cole?'

'Write to those who have not made such violent professions.'

'So I will, dear. Especially to those that are married and come to London. Oh, and I'll write to that cold-blooded thing, Lady Cicely Treherne. Why do you shake your head?'

'Did I? I was not aware. Well, dear; if ladies of rank were to come here, I fear they might make you discontented with your lot.'

'All the women on earth could not do that. However, the chances are she will not come near me: she left the school quite a big girl, an immense girl, when I was only twelve. She used to smile at my capriccios; and once she kissed me—actually. She was an awful sawny, though, and so affected: I think I will write to her.'

These letters brought just one lady, a Mrs. Turner, who talked to Rosa very glibly about herself, and amused Rosa twice: at the third visit, Rosa tried to change the conversation. Mrs. Turner instantly got up, and went away. She could not bear the sound of the human voice, unless it was talking about her and her affairs.

And now Staines began to feel downright uneasy. Income was going steadily out: not a shilling coming in. The lame, the blind, and the sick, frequented his dispensary, and got his skill out of him gratis, and sometimes a little physic, a little wine, and other things that cost him money: but,

of the patients that pay, not one came to his front door.

He walked round and round his little yard, like a hyena in its cage, waiting, waiting, waiting; and oh! how he envied the lot of those, who can hunt for work, instead of having to stay at home, and wait for others to come, whose will they cannot influence. His heart began to sicken with hope deferred, and dim forebodings of the future; and he saw, with grief, that his wife was getting duller and duller, and that her days dragged more heavily far than his own; for he could study.

At last his knocker began to show signs of life: his visitors were physicians. His lectures on 'Diagnosis,' were well known to them; and one after another found him out. They were polite, kind, even friendly; but here it ended: these gentlemen, of course, did not resign their patients to him; and the inferior class of practitioners avoided his door like a pestilence.

Mrs. Staines, who had always lived for amusement, could strike out no fixed occupation; her time hung like lead; the house was small; and, in small houses, the faults of servants run against the mistress, and she can't help seeing them, and all the worse for her. It is easier to keep things clean in the country, and Rosa had a high standard, which her two servants could never quite attain. This annoyed her, and she began to scold a little. They answered civilly, but, in other respects, remained imperfect beings; they laid out every shilling they earned in finery; and this, I am ashamed to say, irritated Mrs. Staines, who was wearing out her wedding garments, and had no excuse for buying, and Staines had begged her to be economical. The more they dressed, the more she scolded;

they began to answer. She gave the cook warning; the other, though not on good terms with the cook, had a gush of *esprit du corps* directly, and gave Mrs. Staines warning.

Mrs. Staines told her husband all this: he took her part, though without openly interfering; and they had two new servants, not so good as the last.

This worried Rosa sadly; but it was a fleabite to the deeper nature, and more forecasting mind of her husband, still doomed to pace that miserable yard, like a hyena, chafing, seeking, longing for the patient that never came.

Rosa used to look out of his dressing-room window, and see him pace the yard. At first, tears of pity stood in her eyes. By-and-by she got angry with the world; and at last, strange to say, a little irritated with him. It is hard for a weak woman to keep up all her respect for the man that fails.

One day, after watching him a long time unseen, she got excited, put on her shawl and bonnet, and ran down to him: she took him by the arm; 'If you love me, come out of this prison, and walk with me; we are too miserable. I shall be your first patient if this goes on much longer.' He looked at her, saw she was very excited, and had better be humoured; so he kissed her, and just said, with a melancholy smile, 'How poor are they that have not patience.' Then he put on his hat, and walked in the Park, and Kensington Gardens, with her. The season was just beginning. There were carriages enough, and gay Amazons enough, to make poor Rosa sigh more than once.

Christopher heard the sigh; and pressed her arm, and said 'Courage, love, I hope to see you among them yet.'

'The sooner the better,' said she, a little hardly.

'And, meantime, which of them all is as beautiful as you?'

'All I know is, they are more attractive. Who looks at me? walking tamely by.'

Christopher said nothing: but these words seemed to imply a thirst for admiration, and made him a little uneasy.

By-and-by the walk put the swift-changing Rosa in spirits, and she began to chat gaily, and hung prattling and beaming on her husband's arm, when they entered Curzon Street. Here, however, occurred an incident, trifling in itself, but unpleasant. Dr. Staines saw one of his best Kentish patients get feebly out of his carriage, and call on Dr. Barr. He started, and stopped. Rosa asked what was the matter. He told her. She said '*We are unfortunate.*'

Staines said nothing; he only quickened his pace; but he was greatly disturbed. She expected him to complain that she had dragged him out, and lost him that first chance. But he said nothing. When they got home, he asked the servant had anybody called.

'No, sir.'

'Surely you are mistaken, Jane. A gentleman in a carriage!'

'Not a creature have been since you went out, sir.'

'Well then, dearest,' said he, sweetly, 'we have nothing to reproach ourselves with. Then he knit his brow gloomily. It is worse than I thought. It seems even one's country patients go to another doctor when they visit London. It is hard. It is hard.'

Rosa leaned her head on his shoulder, and curled round him, as one she would shield against the world's injustice; but she said nothing; she was a little

frightened at his eye that lowered, and his noble frame that trembled a little, with ire suppressed.

Two days after this, a brougham drove up to the door, and a tallish, fattish, pasty-faced man got out, and inquired for Dr. Staines.

He was shown into the dining-room, and told Jane he had come to consult the doctor.

Rosa had peeped over the stairs, all curiosity; she glided noiselessly down, and with love's swift foot got into the yard before Jane. 'He is come! he is come! Kiss me.'

Dr. Staines kissed her first, and then asked who was come.

'Oh, nobody of any consequence. Only the first patient. Kiss me again.'

Dr. Staines kissed her again, and then was for going to the first patient.

'No,' said she; 'not yet. I met a doctor's wife at Dr. Mayne's, and she told me things. You must always keep them waiting; or else they think nothing of you. Such a funny woman! "Treat 'em like dogs, my dear," she said. but I told her they wouldn't come to be treated like dogs or any other animal.'

'You had better have kept that to yourself,' I think.

'Oh! if you are going to be disagreeable, good-bye. You can go to your patient, sir. Christie, dear, if he is very—very ill—and I'm sure I hope he is—oh, how wicked I am; may I have a new bonnet?'

'If you really want one.'

On the patient's card was 'Mr. Pettigrew, 47, Manchester Square.'

As soon as Staines entered the room, the first patient told him who, and what, he was, a retired civilian from India; but he had got a son there still, a very rising man; wanted to be a parson; but

he would not stand that; bad profession; don't rise by merit; very hard to rise at all;—no, India was the place. 'As for me, I made my fortune there in ten years. Obligated to leave it now—invald this many years; no *tons*. Tried two or three doctors in this neighbourhood; heard there was a new one, had written a book on something. Thought I would try *him*.'

To stop him, Staines requested to feel his pulse, and examine his tongue and eye.

'You are suffering from indigestion,' said he. 'I will write you a prescription; but, if you want to get well, you must simplify your diet very much.'

While he was writing the prescription, off went this patient's tongue, and ran through the topics of the day, and into his family history again.

Staines listened politely. He could afford it, having only this one.

At last, the first patient, having delivered an 8vo. vol. of nothing, rose to go; but it seems that speaking an 'infinite deal of nothing' exhausts the body, though it does not affect the mind; for the first patient sank down in his chair again. 'I have excited myself too much—feel rather faint.'

Staines saw no signs of coming syncope; he rang the bell quietly, and ordered a decanter of sherry to be brought; the first patient filled himself a glass; then another; and went off, revived, to chatter elsewhere. But, at the door, he said, 'I had always a running account with Dr. Mivar. I suppose you don't object to that system. Double fee the first visit, single afterwards.'

Dr. Staines bowed a little stiffly; he would have preferred the money. However, he looked at the Blue Book, and found his visitor lived

at 47, Manchester Square; so that removed his anxiety.

The first patient called every other day, chattered nineteen (to the dozen, was exhausted, drank two glasses of sherry, and drove away.

Soon after this a second patient called. This one was a deputy patient—Collett, a retired butler—kept a lodging-house, and waited at parties; he lived close by, but had a married daughter in Chelsea. Would the doctor visit her, and he would be responsible?

Staines paid the woman a visit or two, and treated her so effectually, that soon her visits were paid to him. She was cured, and Staines, who by this time wanted to see money, sent to Collett.

Collett did not answer.

Staines wrote warmly.

Collett dead silent.

Staines employed a solicitor.

Collett said he had recommended the patient, that was all—he had never said he would pay her debts. That was her husband's business.

Now her husband was the mate of a ship; would not be in England for eighteen months.

The woman, visited by lawyer's clerk, cried bitterly, and said she and her children had scarcely enough to eat.

Lawyer advised Staines to abandon the case, and pay him two pounds fifteen shillings, expenses. He did so.

'This is damnable,' said he. 'I must get it out of Pettigrew; by-the-by, he has not been here this two days.'

He waited another day for Pettigrew, and then wrote to him. No answer. Called. Pettigrew gone abroad. House in Manchester Square to let.

Staines went to the house-agent with his tale. Agent was impenetrable at first; but at last, won by

the doctor's manner and his unhappiness, referred him to Pettigrew's solicitor; the solicitor was a respectable man, and said he would forward the claim to Pettigrew in Paris.

But, by this time, Pettigrew was chatting and guzzling in Berlin; and thence he got to St. Petersburg. In that stronghold of gluttony he gourmandized more than ever, and, being unable to chatter it off his stomach, as in other cities, had apoplexy, and died.

But, long before this, Staines saw his money was as irrecoverable as his sherry; and he said to Rosa, 'I wonder whether I shall ever live to curse the human race?'

'Heaven forbid!' said Rosa. 'Oh, they use you cruelly, my poor, poor Christie!'

Thus for months the young Doctor's patients bled him, and that was all.

And Rosa got more and more moped at being in the house so much, and pestered Christopher to take her out, and he declined; and, being a man hard to beat, took to writing on medical subjects, in hopes of getting some money from the various medical and scientific publications; but he found it as hard to get the wedge in there as to get patients.

At last Rosa's remonstrances began to rise into something that sounded like reproaches. One Sunday she came to him in her bonnet, and interrupted his studies, to say he might as well lay down the pen and talk. Nobody would publish anything he wrote.

Christopher frowned, but contained himself; and laid down the pen.

'I might as well as not be married at all as be a doctor's wife. You are never seen out with me, not even to church. Do behave like a Christian, and come to church with me, now.'

Dr. Staines shook his head.

'Why, I wouldn't miss church for all the world. Any excitement is better than always moping. Come over the water with me. The time Jane and I went the clergyman read a paper that Mr. Brown had fallen down in a fit. There was such a rush directly, and I'm sure fifty ladies went out—fancy, all Mrs. Browns! Wasn't that fun?'

'Fun? I don't see it. Well, Rosa, your mind is, evidently, better adapted to diversion than mine is. Go you to church, love, and I'll continue my studies.'

'Then all I can say is, I wish I was back in my father's house. Husband! friend! companion!—I have none.'

Then she burst out crying violently; and, being shocked at what she had said, and at the agony it had brought into her husband's face, she went off into hysterics; and, as his heart would not let him bellow at her, or empty a bucket on her as he could on another patient, she had a good long bout of them, and got her way; for she broke up his studies for that day, at all events.

Even after the hysterics were got under, she continued to moan and sigh very prettily, with her lovely, languid head pillowed on her husband's arm; in a word, though the hysterics were real, yet this innocent young person had the presence of mind to postpone entire convalescence, and lay herself out to be petted all day. But fate willed it otherwise. While she was sighing and moaning, came to the door a scurrying of feet; and then a sharp, persistent ringing that meant something. The moaner cocked eye and ear, and said, in her every-day voice, which, coming so suddenly, sounded very droll, 'What is that, I wonder?'

Jane hurried to the street door, and Rosa recovered by magic; and, preferring gossip to hysterics, in an almost gleeful whisper ordered Christopher to open the door of the study. The Bijou was so small that the following dialogue rang in their ears:

A boy in buttons gasped out, 'Oh, if you please, will you ast the doctor to come round directly; there's a haocident.'

'La, blees me!' said Jane; and never budged.

'Yes, miss. It's our missus's little girl fallen right off an i chair, and cut her head dreadful, and smothered in blood.'

'La, to be sure!' And she waited steadily for more.

'Ay, and missus she fainted right off; and I've been to the regler doctor, which he's out; and Sarah, the housemaid, said I had better come here; you was only just set up, she said; you wouldn't have so much to do, says she.'

'That is all she knows,' said Sarah. 'Why, our master they pulls him in pieces which is to have him fust.'

'What an awful liar! Oh, you good girl!' whispered Dr. Staines and Rosa in one breath.

'Ah, well,' said Buttons; 'any way, Sarah says she knows you are clever, 'cos her little girl as lives with her mother, and calls Sarah aunt, has bin to your 'spensary with ringworm, and you cured her right off.'

'Ay, and a good many more,' said Jane, loftily. She was a housemaid of imagination; and, while Staines was putting some lint and an instrument case into his pocket, she proceeded to relate a number of miraculous cures. Doctor Staines interrupted them by suddenly emerging, and inviting Buttons to take him to the house.

Mrs. Staines was so pleased with Jane for cracking up the Doctor, that she gave her five shillings; and after that used to talk to her a great deal more than to the cook, which in due course set all three by the ears.

Buttons took the Doctor to a fine house in the same street, and told him his mistress's name on the way—Mrs. Lucas. He was taken up to the nursery, and found Mrs. Lucas seated, crying and lamenting, and a woman holding a little girl of about seven, whose brow had been cut open by the fender, on which she had fallen from a chair; it looked very ugly, and was even now bleeding.

Dr. Staines lost no time; he examined the wound keenly, and then said kindly to Mrs. Lucas, 'I am happy to tell you it is not serious.' He then asked for a large basin and some tepid water, and bathed it so softly and soothingly that the child soon became composed; and the mother discovered the artist at once. He compressed the wound, and explained to Mrs. Lucas that the principal thing really was to avoid an ugly scar. 'There is no danger,' said he. He then bound the wound neatly up, and had the girl put to bed. 'You will not wake her at any particular hour, nurse. Let her sleep, Have a little strong beef-tea ready, and give it her at any hour, night or day, she asks for it. But do not force it on her, or you will do her more harm than good. She had better sleep before she eats.'

Mrs. Lucas begged him to come every morning; and, as he was going, she shook hands with him, and the soft palm deposited a hard substance wrapped in paper. He took it with professional gravity, and seeming unconsciousness; but, once outside the house,

went home on wings. He ran up to the drawing-room, and found his wife seated, and playing at reading. He threw himself on his knees, and the fee into her lap; and, while she unfolded the paper with an ejaculation of pleasure, he said, 'Darling, the first real patient—the first real fee. It is yours to buy the new bonnet.'

'Oh, I'm so glad,' said she, with her eyes glistening. 'But I'm afraid one can't get a bonnet fit to wear—for a guinea.'

Dr. Staines visited his little patient every day, and received his guinea. Mrs. Lucas also called him in for her own little ailments, and they were the best possible kind of ailments: being almost imaginary, there was no limit to them.

Then did Mrs. Staines turn jealous of her husband. 'They never ask me,' said she; 'and I am moped to death.'

'It is hard,' said Christopher, sadly. 'But have a little patience. Society will come to you long before practice comes to me.'

About two o'clock one afternoon a carriage and pair drove up, and a gorgeous footman delivered a card, 'Lady Cicely Treherne.'

Of course Mrs. Staines was at home, and only withheld by propriety from bounding into the passage to meet her schoolfellow. However, she composed herself in the drawing-room, and presently the door was opened, and a very tall young woman, richly, but not gaily dressed, drifted into the room, and stood there a statue of composure.

Rosa had risen to fly to her; but the reverence a girl of eighteen strikes into a child of twelve hung about her still, and she came timidly forward, blushing and sparkling, a curious contrast in colour and mind to her visitor; for Lady Cicely was Languor in person—her hair whitey-brown, her face a fine

oval, but almost colourless; her eyes a pale grey, her neck and hands incomparably white and beautiful—a lymphatic young lady, a live antidote to emotion. However, Rosa's beauty, timidity, and undisguised affectionateness were something so different from what she was used to in the world of fashion, that she actually smiled, and held out both her hands a little way. Rosa seized them, and pressed them; they let her, and remained passive and limp.

'Oh, Lady Cicely,' said Rosa, 'how kind of you to come.'

'How kind of you to send to me,' was the polite, but perfectly cool, reply. 'But how you are grown, and—may I say improved?—you la petite Lusignan! It is inwonderful,' lisped her ladyship, very calmly.

'I was only a child,' said Rosa. 'You were always so beautiful and tall, and kind to a little monkey like me. Oh, pray sit down, Lady Cicely, and talk of old times.'

She drew her gently to the sofa, and they sat down hand in hand; but Lady Cicely's high-bred reserve made her a very poor gossip about anything that touched herself and her family; so Rosa, though no egotist, was drawn into talking about herself more than she would have done had she deliberately planned the conversation. But here was an old schoolfellow, and a singularly polite listener, and so out came her love, her genuine happiness, her particular griefs, and especially the crowning grievance, no society, moped to death, &c.

Lady Cicely could hardly understand the sentiment in a woman who so evidently loved her husband. 'Society!' said she, after due reflection, 'why, it is a bo-a.' (And here I may as well explain that Lady Cicely spoke certain words falsely, and others affect-

edly; and, as for the letter *r*, she could say it if she made a hearty effort, but was generally too lazy to throw her leg over it.) 'Society! I'm drenched to death with it. If I could only catch fish like other women, and love somebody, I would much rather have a *tête-à-tête* with him than go teawing about all day and all night, from one untwisting crowd to another. To be sure,' said she, puzzling the matter out, 'you are a beauty, and would be more looked at.'

'The idea! and—oh no! no! it is not that. But even in the country we had always some society.'

'Well, dyar, believe me, with your appeawance, you can have as much society as you please; but it will boe you to death, as it does me, and then you will long to be left quiet with a sensible man who loves you.'

Said Rosa, 'When shall I have another *tête-à-tête* with you, I wonder? Oh, it has been such a comfort to me. Bless you for coming. There—I wrote to Cecilia, and Emily, and Mrs. Bosanquet that is now, and all my sworn friends, and to think of you being the one to come—you that never kissed me but once, and an earl's daughter into the bargain.'

'Ha! ha! ha!—Lady Cicely actually laughed for once in a way, and did not feel the effort. 'As for kissing,' said she, 'if I fall shawt, fawgive me. I was nevas vewy demonstwative.'

'No; and I have had a lesson. That Florence Cole—Florence Whiting that was, you know—was always kiassing me, and she has turned out a traitor. I'll tell you all about her.' And she did.

Lady Cicely thought Mrs. Staines a little too unreserved in her conversation; but was so charmed with her sweetness and freshness

that she kept up the acquaintance, and called on her twice a-week during the season. At first she wondered that her visits were not returned; but Rosa let out that she was ashamed to call on foot in Grosvenor Square.

Lady Cicely shrugged her beautiful shoulders a little at that; but she continued to do the visiting, and to enjoy the simple, innocent rapture with which she was received.

This lady's pronunciation of many words was false or affected. She said 'good murning' for 'good morning,' and turned other vowels into diphthongs, and played two or three pranks with her 'r's. But we cannot be all imperfect: with her pronunciation her folly came to a full stop. I really believe she lisped less nonsense and bad taste in a year than some of us articulate in a day. To be sure, folly is generally uttered in a hurry, and she was too deplorably lazy to speak fast on any occasion whatever.

One day Mrs. Staines took her upstairs, and showed her from the back window her husband pacing the yard, waiting for patients. Lady Cicely folded her arms, and contemplated him at first with a sort of zoological curiosity. Gentleman pacing back yard, like hyena, she had never seen before.

At last she opened her mouth in a whisper, 'What is he doing?'

'Waiting for patients.'

'Oh! Waiting—for—patients?'

'For patients that never come, and never will come.'

'Cuwious!—How little I know of life!'

'It is that all day, dear, or else writing.'

Lady Cicely, with her eyes fixed on Staines, made a motion with her hand that she was attending.

'And they won't publish a word he writes.'

'Poor man!'

'Nice for me; is it not?'

'I begin to understand,' said Lady Cicely, quietly; and soon after retired with her invariable composure.

Meantime, Dr. Staines, like a good husband, had thrown out occasional hints to Mrs. Lucas that he had a wife, beautiful, accomplished, moped. More than that, he went so far as to regret to her that Mrs. Staines, being in a neighbourhood new to him, saw so little society; the more so, as she was formed to shine, and had not been used to seclusion.

All these hints fell dead on Mrs. Lucas. A handsome and skilful doctor was welcome to her: his wife—that was quite another matter.

But one day Mrs. Lucas saw Lady Cicely Treherne's carriage standing at the door. The style of the whole turnout impressed her. She wondered whose it was.

On another occasion she saw it drive up, and the lady get out. She recognised her; and the very next day this *parvenue* said adroitly, 'Now, Dr. Staines, really you can't be allowed to hide your wife in this way. (Staines stared.) Why not introduce her to me next Wednesday? It is my night. I would give a dinner expressly for her; but I don't like to do that, while my husband is in Naples.'

When Staines carried the invitation to his wife, she was delighted, and kissed him with childish frankness.

But the very next moment she became thoughtful, uneasy, depressed. 'Oh, dear; I've nothing to wear.'

'Oh, nonsense, Rosa. Your wedding outfit.'

'The idea! I can't go as a bride. It's not a masquerade.'

'But you have other dresses.'

'All gone by, more or less; or

not fit for such parties as *she* gives. A hundred carriages!'

'Bring them down, and let me see them.'

'Oh, yes.' And the lady, who had nothing to wear, paraded a very fair show of dresses.

Staines saw something to admire in all of them. Mrs. Staines found more to object to in each.

At last he fell upon a silver-grey silk, of superlative quality.

'That! It is as old as the hills,' shrieked Rosa.

'It looks just out of the shop. Come, tell the truth; how often have you worn it?'

'I wore it before I was married.'

'Ay, but how often?'

'Twice. Three times, I believe.'

'I thought so. It is as good as new.'

'But I have had it so long by me. I had it two years before I made it up.'

'What does that matter? Do you think the people can tell how long a dress has been lurking in your wardrobe? This is childish, Rosa. There, with this dress as good as new, and your beauty, you will be as much admired, and perhaps hated, as your heart can desire.'

'I am afraid not,' said Rosa, naively. 'Oh, how I wish I had known a week ago.'

'I am very thankful you did not,' said Staines, dryly.

At ten o'clock, Mrs. Staines was nearly dressed; at a quarter past ten she demanded ten minutes; at half-past ten she sought a reprieve; at a quarter to eleven, being assured that the street was full of carriages, which had put down at Mrs. Lucas's, she consented to emerge; and in a minute they were at the house.

They were shown first into a

cloak-room, and then into a tea-room, and then mounted the stairs. One servant took their names, and bawled them to another four yards off, he to another about as near, and so on; and they edged themselves into the room, not yet too crowded to move in.

They had not taken many steps, on the chance of finding their hostess, when a slight buzz arose, and seemed to follow them.

Rosa wondered what that was; but only for a moment; she observed a tall, stout, aquiline woman fix an eye of bitter, diabolical, malignant hatred on her; and, as she advanced, ugly noses were cocked disdainfully, and scraggy shoulders elevated at the risk of sending the bones through the leather, and a titter or two shot after her. A woman's instinct gave her the key at once; the sexes had complimented her at sight; each in their way; the men with respectful admiration; the women, with their inflammable jealousy, and ready hatred in another of the quality they value most in themselves. But the country girl was too many for them: she would neither see nor hear, but moved sedately on, and calmly crushed them with her southern beauty. Their dry, powdered faces could not live by the side of her glowing skin, with nature's delicate gloss upon it, and the rich blood mantling below it. The got-up beauties, *i.e.*, the majority, seemed literally to fade and wither as she passed.

Mrs. Lucas got to her, suppressed a slight maternal pang, having daughters to marry, and took her line in a moment; here was a decoy duck. Mrs. Lucas was all graciousness, made acquaintance, and took a little turn with her, introducing her to one or two persons; among the rest, to the malignant woman, Mrs. Barr. Mrs. Barr, on

this, ceased to look daggers, and substituted icicles; but, on the hateful beauty moving away, dropped the icicles, and resumed the poniards.

The rooms filled; the heat became oppressive, and the mixed odours of flowers, scents, and perspiring humanity, sickening. Some, unable to bear it, trickled out of the room, and sat all down the stairs.

Rosa began to feel faint. Up came a tall, sprightly girl, whose pertness was redeemed by a certain *bonhomie*, and said, 'Mrs. Staines, I believe? I am to make myself agreeable to you. That is the order from head-quarters.'

'Miss Lucas,' said Staines.

She jerked a little off-hand bow to him, and said, 'Will you trust her to me for five minutes?'

'Certainly.' But he did not much like it.

Miss Lucas carried her off, and told Dr. Staines, over her shoulder, now he could flirt to his heart's content.

'Thank you,' said he, drily. 'I'll await your return.'

'Oh, there are some much greater flirts here than I am,' said the ready Miss Lucas; and, whispering something in Mrs. Staines's ear, suddenly glided with her behind a curtain, pressed a sort of button fixed to a looking-glass door. The door opened, and behold they were in a delicious place, for which I can hardly find a word, since it was a boudoir and a conservatory in one: a large octagon, the walls lined from floor to ceiling with looking-glasses of moderate width, at intervals, and with creepers that covered the intervening spaces of the wall, and were trained so as to break the outline of the glasses, without greatly clouding the reflection. Ferns, in great variety, were grouped in a deep crescent, and

in the bight of this green bay were a small table and chairs. As there were no hot-house plants, the temperature was very cool, compared with the reeking oven they had escaped; and a little fountain bubbled, and fed a little meandering gutter that trickled away among the ferns; it ran crystal clear over little bright pebbles and shells. It did not always run, you understand; but Miss Lucas turned a secret tap, and started it.

'Oh, how heavenly!' said Rosa, with a sigh of relief; 'and how good of you to bring me here.'

'Yes; by rights I ought to have waited till you fainted. But there is no making acquaintance among all those people. Mamma will ask such crowds; one is like a fly in a glue-pot.'

Miss Lucas had good nature, smartness, and animal spirits; hence arose a vivacity and fluency that were often amusing, and passed for very clever. Reserve she had none; would talk about strangers, or friends, herself, her mother, her God, and the last buffoon-singer, in a breath. At a hint from Rosa, she told her who the lady in the pink dress was, and the lady in the violet velvet, and so on; for each lady was defined by her dress, and, more or less, quizzed by this show-woman, not exactly out of malice, but because it is smarter and more natural to decry than to praise, and a little *médiance* is the spice to gossip, belongs to it, as mint-sauce to lamb. So they chattered away, and were pleased with each other, and made friends, and there, in cool grot, quite forgot the sufferings of their fellow-creatures in the adjacent Turkish bath, yeleft Society. It was Rosa who first recollected herself. 'Will not Mrs. Lucas be angry with me, if I keep you all to myself?'

'Oh, no; but I am afraid we must go into the hothouse again. I like the greenhouse best, with such a nice companion.'

They slipped noiselessly into the throng again, and wriggled about, Miss Lucas presenting her new friend to several ladies and gentlemen.

Presently Staines found them, and then Miss Lucas wriggled away; and, in due course, the room was thinned by many guests driving off home, or to balls, and other receptions, and Dr. Staines and Mrs. Staines went home to the Bijou. Here the physician prescribed bed; but the lady would not hear of such a thing, until she had talked it all over. So they compared notes, and Rosa told him how well she had got on with Miss Lucas, and made a friendship. 'But for that,' said she, 'I should be sorry I went among those people, such a dowdy.'

'Dowdy!' said Staines. 'Why you stormed the town; you were the great success of the night, and, for all I know, of the season.' The wretch delivered this with unbecoming indifference.

'It is too bad to mock me, Christie. Where were your eyes?'

'To the best of my recollection they were one on each side of my nose.'

'Yes, but some people are eyes, and no eyes.'

'I scorn the imputation; try me.'

'Very well. Then did you see that lady in sky-blue silk, embroidered with flowers and flounced with white velvet, and the corsage point lace; and oh, such emeralds?'

'I did; a tall, skinny woman, with eyes resembling her jewels in colour, though not in brightness.'

'Never mind her eyes; it is

her dress I am speaking of. Exquisite; and what a coiffure! Well, did you see *her* in the black velvet, trimmed so deep with Chantilly lace, wave on wave, and her head-dress of crimson flowers, and such a *rivière* of diamonds; oh, dear! oh, dear!

'I did, love. The room was an oven, but her rubicund face and suffocating costume made it seem a furnace.'

'Stuff! Well, did you see the lady in the corn-coloured silk, and poppies in her hair?'

'Of course I did. Ceres in person. She made me feel very hot, too; but I cooled myself at her pale, sickly face.'

'Never mind their faces; that is not the point.'

'Oh, excuse me; it is always a point with us benighted males, all eyes and no eyes.'

'Well, then, the lady in white, with cherry-velvet bands, and a white tunic looped with crimson, and head-dress of white illusion, à la vierge, I think they call it.'

'It was very refreshing; and adapted to that awful atmosphere. It was the nearest approach to nudity I ever saw, even amongst fashionable people.'

'It was lovely; and then that superb figure in white illusion and gold, with all those narrow flounces over her slip of white silk *glacé*, and a wreath of white flowers, with gold wheat-ears amongst them, in her hair; and oh! oh! oh! her pearls, Oriental, and as big as almonds!'

'And oh! oh! oh! her nose! reddish, and as long as a wood-cock's.'

'Noses! noses! stupid! That is not what strikes you first in a woman dressed like an angel.'

'Well, if you were to run up against that one, as I nearly did, her nose *would* be the thing that would strike you first. Nose!

it was a rostrum! the spear-head of Goliath.

'Now, don't, Christopher. This is no laughing matter. Do you mean you were not ashamed of your wife? I was.'

'No, I was not; you had but one rival; a very young lady, wise before her age; a blonde, with violet eyes. She was dressed in light mauve-coloured silk, without a single flounce, or any other tomfoolery to fritter away the sheen and colour of an exquisite material; her sunny hair was another wave of colour, wreathed with a thin line of white jessamine flowers closely woven, that scented the air. This girl was the moon of that assembly, and you were the sun.'

'I never even saw her.'

'Eyes, and ~~no~~ eyes. She saw you, and said, 'Oh, what a beautiful creature!' for I heard her. As for the old stagers, whom you admire so, their faces were all clogged with powder, the pores stopped up, the true texture of the skin abolished. They looked downright nasty, whenever you or or that young girl passed by them. Then it was you saw to what a frightful extent women are got up in our day, even young women, and respectable women. No, Rosa, dress can do little for you; you have beauty—real beauty.'

'Beauty! That passes unnoticed, unless one is well dressed.'

'Then what an obscure pair the Apollo Belvidere and the Venus de Medicis must be.'

'Oh! they are dressed—in marble.'

Christopher Staines then smiled.

'Well done,' said he, admiringly. 'That is a knock-down blow. So now you have silenced your husband, go you to bed directly. I can't afford you diamonds; so I will take care of that little insignificant trifle, your beauty.'

Mrs. Staines and Mrs. Lucas exchanged calls, and soon Mrs. Staines could no longer complain she was out of the world. Mrs. Lucas invited her to every party, because her beauty was an instrument of attraction she knew how to use; and Miss Lucas took a downright fancy to her; drove her in the Park, and on Sundays to the Zoological Gardens, just beginning to be fashionable.

The Lucases rented a box at the opera, and if it was not let at the library by six o'clock, and if other engagements permitted, word was sent round to Mrs. Staines, as a matter of course, and she was taken to the opera. She began almost to live at the Lucas's, and to be oftener fatigued than moped.

The usual order of things was inverted; the maiden lady educated the matron; for Miss Lucas knew all about everybody in the Park, honourable or dishonourable; all the scandals, and all the flirtations; and whatever she knew, she related point-blanc. Being as inquisitive as voluble, she soon learned how Mrs. Staines and her husband were situated. She took upon her to advise her in many things, and especially impressed upon her that Dr. Staines must keep a carriage, if he wanted to get on in medicine. This piece of advice accorded so well with Rosa's wishes, that she urged it on her husband again and again.

He objected that no money was coming in, and therefore it would be insane to add to their expenses. Rosa persisted, and at last worried Staines with her importunity. He began to give rather short answers. Then she quoted Miss Lucas against him. He treated the authority with marked contempt; and then Rosa fired up a little. Then Staines held his peace; but did not buy a carriage to visit his no patients.

So, at last, Rosa complained to Lady Cicely Treherne, and made her the judge between her husband and herself.

Lady Cicely drawled out a prompt but polite refusal to play that part. All that could be elicited from her, and that with difficulty, was, "Why quall with your husband about a cawwige; he is your best fwiend."

'Ah, that he is,' said Rosa; 'but Miss Lucas is a good friend, and she knows the world. We don't; neither Christopher nor I.'

So she continued to nag at her husband about it, and to say that he was throwing his only chance away.

Galled as he was by neglect, this was irritating, and, at last, he could not help telling her she was unreasonable. 'You live a gay life, and I a sad one. I consent to this, and let you go about with these Lucas's, because you were so dull; but you should not consult them in our private affairs. Their interference is indelicate and improper. I will not set up a carriage till I have patients to visit. I am sick of seeing our capital dwindle, and no income created. I will never set up a carriage till I have taken a hundred-guinea fee.'

'Oh! Then we shall go splash- ing through the mud all our days.'

'Or ride in a cab,' said Christopher, with a quiet doggedness that left no hope of his yielding.

One afternoon Miss Lucas called for Mrs. Staines to drive in the Park, but did not come upstairs; it was an engagement, and she knew Mrs. Staines would be ready, or nearly. Mrs. Staines, not to keep her waiting, came down rather hastily, and, in the very

passage, whipped out of her pocket a little glass, and a little powder puff, and puffed her face all over in a trice. She was then going out; but her husband called her into the study. 'Rosa, my dear,' said he, 'you were going out with a dirty face.'

'Oh!' cried she, 'give me a glass.'

'There is no need of that. All you want is a basin and some nice rain-water. I keep a little reservoir of it.'

He then handed her the same with great politeness. She looked in his eye, and saw he was not to be trifled with. She complied like a lamb, and the heavenly colour and velvet gloss that resulted were admirable.

He kissed her, and said, 'Ah! now you are my Rosa again. Oblige me by handing over that powder-puff to me.' She looked vexed, but complied. 'When you come back, I will tell you why.'

'You are a pest,' said Mrs. Staines, and so joined her friend, rosy with rain-water and a rub.

'Dear me, how handsome you look to-day,' was Miss Lucas's first remark.

Rosa never dreamed that rain-water and rub could be the cause of her looking so well.

'It is my tiresome husband,' said she. 'He objects to powder, and he has taken away my puff.'

'And you stood that?'

'Obliged to.'

'Why, you poor-spirited little creature, I should like to see a husband presume to interfere with me in those things. Here, take mine.'

Rosa hesitated a little. 'Well —no—I think not.'

Miss Lucas laughed at her, and quizzed her so on her allowing a man to interfere in such sacred things as dress and cosmetics, that she came back irritated with her

husband, and gave him a short answer or two. Then he asked what was the matter.

'You treat me like a child—taking away my very puff.'

'I treat you like a beautiful flower, that no bad gardener shall wither whilst I am here.'

'What nonsense! How could that wither me? It is only violet-powder—what they put on babies.'

'And who are the Herods that put it on babies?'

'Their own mothers, that love them ten times more than the fathers do.'

'And kill a hundred of them for one a man ever kills. Mothers! —the most wholesale homicides in the nation. We will examine your violet powder: bring it down here.'

While she was gone he sent for a breakfast-cupful of flour, and when she came back he had his scales out, and begged her to put a teaspoonful of flour into one scale and of violet powder into another. The flour kicked the beam, as Homer expresses himself.

'Put another spoonful of flour.'

The one spoonful of violet powder outweighed the two of flour.

'Now,' said Staines, 'does not that show you the presence of a mineral in your vegetable powder? I suppose they tell you it is made of white violets dried, and triturated in a diamond mill. Let us find out what metal it is. We need not go very deep into chemistry for that.' He then applied a simple test, and detected the presence of lead in large quantities. Then he lectured her: 'Invisible perspiration is a process of nature necessary to health and to life. The skin is made porous for that purpose. You can kill anybody in an hour or two by closing the pores. A certain infallible ass, called Pope Leo XII., killed a little boy in two hours, by gilding him to adorn the

pageant of his first procession as Pope. But what is death to the whole body must be injurious to a part. What madness, then, to clog the pores of so large and important a surface as the face, and check the invisible perspiration: how much more to insert lead into your system every day of your life; a cumulative poison, and one so deadly and so subtle, that the Sheffield file-cutters die in their prime, from merely hammering on a leaden anvil. And what do you gain by this suicidal habit? No plum has a sweeter bloom or more delicious texture than the skin of your young face; but this mineral filth hides that delicate texture, and substitutes a dry, uniform appearance, more like a certain kind of leprosy than health. Nature made your face the rival of peaches, roses, lilies; and you say "No; I know better than my Creator and my God; my face shall be like a dusty miller's." Go into any flour-mill, and there you shall see men with faces exactly like your friend Miss Lucas's. But, before a miller goes to his sweetheart, he always washes his face. You ladies would never get a miller down to your level in brains. It is a miller's *dirty* face our monomaniacs of women imitate, not the face a miller goes a-courting with.

'La! what a fuss about nothing!'

'About nothing! Is your health nothing? Is your beauty nothing? Well, then, it will cost you nothing to promise me never to put powder on your face again.'

'Very well, I promise. Now what will you do for me?'

'Work for you—write for you—suffer for you—be self-denying for you—and even give myself the pain of disappointing you now and then—looking forward to the time when I shall be able to say "Yes" to everything you ask me. Ah!

child, you little know what it costs me to say "No" to you.'

Rosa put her arms round him, and acquiesced. She was one of those who go with the last speaker; but, for that very reason, the eternal companionship of so flighty and flirt a girl as Miss Lucas was injurious to her.

One day Lady Cicely Treherne was sitting with Mrs. Staines, smiling languidly at her talk, and occasionally drawling out a little plain good sense, when in came Miss Lucas, with her tongue well hung, as usual, and dashed into twenty topics in ten minutes.

This young lady in her discourse was like those little oily beetles you see in small ponds, whose whole life is spent in tacking—confound them!—generally at right angles. What they are in navigation was Miss Lucas in conversation: tacked so eternally from topic to topic, that no man on earth, and not every woman, could follow her.

At the sight and sound of her Lady Cicely congealed and stiffened. Easy and unpretending with Mrs. Staines, she was all dignity, and even majesty, in the presence of this chatterbox; and the smoothness with which the transfiguration was accomplished marked that accomplished actress the high-bred woman of the world.

Rosa, better able to estimate the change of manner than Miss Lucas was, who did not know how little this Sawny was afflicted with misplaced dignity, looked wistfully and distressed at her. Lady Cicely smiled kindly in reply, rose, without seeming to hurry—catch her condescending to be rude to Charlotte Lucas—and took her departure, with a profound and most gracious curtsy to the lady who had driven her away.

Mrs. Staines saw her downstairs, and said, ruefully, 'I am afraid you do not like my friend Miss

Lucas. She is a great rattle, but so goodnatured and clever.'

Lady Cicely shook her head. 'Clevaa people don't talk so much nonsense before stangaas.'

'Oh dear!' said Rosa. 'I was in hopes you would like her.'

'Do you like her?'

'Indeed I do; but I shall not, if she drives an older friend away.'

'My dyah, I'm not easily dwiven from those I esteem. But you undastand that is not a woman for me to mispwonownce my—"ah's" befaw—NOR FOR YOU TO MAKE A BOSOM FWIEND OF—ROSA STAINES.'

She said this with a sudden maternal solemnity and kindness that contrasted nobly and strangely with her yea-nay style, and Mrs. Staines remembered the words years after they were spoken.

It so happened that after this Mrs. Staines received no more visits from Lady Cicely for some time, and that vexed her. She knew her sex enough to be aware that they are very jealous, and she permitted herself to think that this high-minded Sawny was jealous of Miss Lucas.

This idea, founded on a general estimate of her sex, was dispelled by a few lines from Lady Cicely, to say her family and herself were in deep distress: her brother, Lord Aycough, lay dying from an accident.

Then Rosa was all remorse, and ran down to Staines to tell him. She found him with an open letter in his hand. It was from Dr. Barr, and on the same subject. The doctor, who had always been friendly to him, invited him to come down at once to Hallowtree Hall, in Huntingdonshire, to a consultation. There was a friendly intimation to start at once, as the patient might die any moment.

Husband and wife embraced each other in a tumult of sur-

prised thankfulness. A few necessities were thrown into a carpet-bag, and Dr. Staines was soon whirled into Huntingdonshire. Having telegraphed beforehand, he was met at the station by the earl's carriage and people, and driven to the Hall. He was received by an old, silver-haired butler, looking very sad, who conducted him to a boudoir; and then went and tapped gently at the door of the patient's room. It was opened and shut very softly, and Lady Cicely, dressed in black, and looking paler than ever, came into the room.

'Dr. Staines, I think?'

He bowed.

'Thank you for coming so promptly. Dr. Barr is gone. I fear he thinks—he thinks—Oh, Doctor Staines—no sign of life but in his poor hands, that keep moving night and day.'

Staines looked very grave at that. Lady Cicely observed it, and, faint at heart, could say no more, but led the way to the sick room.

There in a spacious chamber, lighted by a grand oriel window and two side windows, lay rank, title, wealth, and youth stricken down in a moment by a common accident. The sufferer's face was bloodless, his eyes fixed, and no signs of life but in his thumbs, and they kept working with strange regularity.

In the room were a nurse and the surgeon; the neighbouring physician, who had called in Doctor Barr, had just paid his visit, and gone away.

Lady Cicely introduced Dr. Staines and Mr. White, and then Dr. Staines stood and fixed his eyes on the patient in profound silence.

Lady Cicely scanned his countenance searchingly, and was struck with the extraordinary power and

intensity it assumed in examining the patient; but the result was not encouraging. Dr. Staines looked grave and gloomy.

At last, without removing his eye from the recumbent figure, he said quietly to Mr. White, 'Thrown from his horse, sir.'

'Horse fell on him, Dr. Staines.'

'Any visible injuries?'

'Yes. Severe contusions, and a rib broken and pressed upon the lungs. I replaced and set it. Will you see?'

'If you please.'

He examined and felt the patient, and said it had been ably done.

Then he was silent and searching.

At last he spoke again. 'The motion of the thumbs corresponds exactly with his pulse.'

'Is that so, sir?'

'It is. The case is without a parallel. How long has he been so?'

'Nearly a week.'

'Impossible!'

'It is so, sir.'

Lady Cicely confirmed this.

'All the better,' said Dr. Staines, upon reflection. 'Well, sir,' said he, 'the visible injuries having been ably relieved, I shall look another way for the cause.' Then, after another pause, 'I must have his head shaved.'

Lady Cicely demurred a little to this; but Dr. Staines stood firm, and his lordship's valet undertook the job.

Staines directed him where to begin; and when he had made a circular tonsure on the top of the head, had it sponged with tepid water.

'I thought so,' said he. 'Here is the mischief,' and he pointed to a very slight indentation on the left side of the pia mater. 'Observe,' said he, 'there is no corresponding indentation on the

other side. Underneath this trifling depression a minute piece of bone is doubtless pressing on the most sensitive part of the brain. He must be trephined.'

Mr. White's eyes sparkled.

'You are a hospital surgeon, sir?'

'Yes, Dr. Staines. I have no fear of the operation.'

'Then I hand the patient over to you. The case at present is entirely surgical.'

White was driven home, and soon returned with the requisite instruments. The operation was neatly performed, and then Lady Cicely was called in. She came trembling; her brother's fingers were still working, but not so regularly.

'That is only *habit*,' said Staines; 'it will soon leave off, now the cause is gone.'

And, truly enough, in about five minutes the fingers became quiet. The eyes became human next; and within half an hour after the operation the Earl gave a little sigh.

Lady Cicely clasped her hands, and uttered a little cry of delight.

'This will not do,' said Staines. 'I shall have you screaming when he speaks.'

'Oh, Doctor Staines, will he ever speak?'

'I think so; and very soon. So be on your guard.'

This strange scene reached its climax soon after by the Earl saying, quietly,

'Are her knees broke, Tom?'

Lady Cicely uttered a little scream, but instantly suppressed it.

'No, my Lord,' said Staines, smartly; 'only rubbed a bit. You can go to sleep, my Lord. I'll take care of the mare.'

'All right,' said his lordship; and composed himself to slumber.

Doctor Staines, at the earnest

request of Lady Cicely, stayed all night; and in course of the day advised her how to nurse the patient, since both physician and surgeon had done with him.

He said the patient's brain might be irritable for some days, and no women in silk dresses, or crinoline, or creaking shoes, must enter the room. He told her the nurse was evidently a clumsy woman, and would be letting things fall. She had better get some old soldier used to nursing. 'And don't whisper in the room,' said he; 'nothing irritates them worse; and don't let anybody play a piano within hearing; but in a day or two you may try him with slow and continuous music on the flute or violin if you like. Don't touch his bed suddenly; don't sit on it or lean on it. Dole sunlight into his room by degrees; and when he can bear it, drench him with it. Never mind what the old school tell you. About these things they know a good deal less than nothing.'

Lady Cicely received all this like an oracle.

The cure was telegraphed to Dr. Barr, and he was requested to settle the fee. He was not the man to undersell the profession, and was jealous of nobody, having a large practice, and a very wealthy wife. So he telegraphed back—'Fifty guineas, and a guinea a mile from London.'

So, as Christopher Staines sat at an early breakfast, with the carriage waiting to take him to the train, two notes were brought him on a salver.

They were both directed by Lady Cicely Treherne. One of them contained a few kind and feeling words of gratitude and esteem; the other, a cheque, drawn by the Earl's steward, for one hundred and thirty guineas.

He bowed up to London, and told it all to Rosa. She sparkled with pride, affection, and joy.

'Now, who says you are not a genius?' she cried. 'A hundred and thirty guineas for one fee! Now, if you love your wife as she loves you—you will set up a brougham.'

(To be continued.)



FRENCH NOVELISTS.

XX.—Victor Hugo.

THERE are few regions of Europe into which Victor Hugo's 'magnificent scream' has not penetrated. Poet, politician, philosopher, novelist—he is far above mediocrity in each vocation, and is more than eminent, is illustrious, in more than one. Though the excitement of recent events, acting upon a man who has lived long the life of a retired student, looking out on a waste of sea, may have carried his political oratory into unpractical frothiness and oceanic splutter, yet we are not justified in following the fashion set by many of the newspapers during the war, of ridiculing him as a political imbecile. We cannot despise the man who in the days of the old republic, in 1851, foresaw the imminence of the empire—that 'immense intrigue,' and had yet the courage to denounce it in the Chamber in such mordant language as this: 'Quoi! après Auguste, Augustule! Quoi! parce que nous avons eu Napoléon-le-grand, il faut que nous ayons Napoléon-le-petit!'

Victor Hugo does not spring from high-born ancestry, but the nineteenth century appears to have been favourable to the stock; for each member of the family has become more or less distinguished during that period. Victor Hugo's father came of a bourgeois family, living at Nancy. Hugo père was born in 1774, and enlisted, at the age of fourteen, in an infantry regiment, just before the time of the revolution. Military promotion was rapid in those days, and passing from grade to grade, being only a sub-lieutenant in 1791, he became a general in

1809. Whilst a captain, between 1797 and 1799, he had terrible functions to fulfil. Having been nominated reporter of a council of war, his business was to carry out the fatal suits against the run-aways, at a time when it was sufficient to have their identity established for them to be ordered away to death. During this period Victor Hugo's two elder brothers were born. The father was probably a man of vigorous intellect, for the three sons have all earned distinction. The elder, Abel Hugo, began life as a page of Joseph Buonaparte, when the latter was king of Spain. He was a notable child for precocity, having entrusted to him, whilst very young indeed, most delicate missions. Become a little older, he saved his own life and the lives of others on several occasions by the exercise of marvellous ingenuity. At fourteen he was with the army, betaking himself, in the most difficult straits or cruel privations, to three or four volumes of French and Spanish poetry which he carried with him. With these he returned to Paris in 1813, and made use of his studies of foreign literature for lectures, which had a marked effect, and prepared the way for the new Romantic School, of which his brother Victor was afterwards the chief. He wrote many valuable works, but only in prose. To his brother he abandoned the poetical domain. He died in 1855, with the first sheets of a great history of the Crimean war just published. The second brother was a kind of seer, with an unquiet, exalted imagination. He wrote some fine energetic lyrics

and dramatic legends, met with an unfortunate love-passion, and went crazy—incurably so.

Victor Marie Hugo was born at Besançon in February 1802; and, as an infant, travelled over Europe, his father being stationed successively in Elba, at Geneva, at Paris, in Italy. Whilst governor of the province of Avelino, the latter destroyed the band of the heroic brigand, Fra Diavolo.

We have some pretty pictures of Hugo's early life. As a boy he resided with his mother in an ancient abbey. She was a lady of some culture and taste, a Vendean and royalist, and the first muse of her son. Under her inspiration the young Victor composed charming juvenile verses, chiefly echoes of her royalism, several of which obtained academical prizes. One of his earlier attempts was refused the prize, because the judges imagined that the candidate was hoaxing them in giving his age as fourteen. As the boy grew older he composed a coronation ode for Charles X., which he was called upon to present to the king. That monarch handed the verses to Chateaubriand for an opinion on their merits, and received the enthusiastic comment upon them from his poetic councillor:—'Sire, c'est un enfant sublime!'

Hugo's mother died when he was nineteen, and at twenty he married a girl even younger than himself, Mdlle. Adèle Foucher. At this date the youth had composed one or two of the books whose names are now known to the world. One of these, 'Han d'Islande,' a sort of etherialized 'Blue Beard,' succeeded so well as to reach a second edition, and bring something of material comfort to the little cottage that lay so cosily hidden amongst trees, but had held previously more hope than realization, more en-

thusiasm than bank notes. The Catholic usage is to make a special confession before marriage. Victor Hugo's youth, it is said, had been so unsullied that the only penance required of him was a chat with Lamennais, his confessor. These chats with Lamennais led, however, to more than a recital of boyish peccadilloes; they inaugurated a spiritual direction on the part of the democratic priest, which soon sowed some deeper thoughts than his mother's in the midst of the young man's untested and superficial royalism.

Chateaubriand followed up his first admiration of Victor Hugo by asking him to visit him, and according him a dignified and gracious patronage. It would make an entertaining picture could we but have seen the high-minded and pompous old author send his secretary for an old manuscript of verses, and read aloud to his young protégé his pet portions of a ponderous tragedy; the young man feeling highly favoured all the while, and doing his utmost to think the whole very fine, and whenever he found a line or a passage that he could conscientiously admire, piling his most assiduous praises upon that.

Like most writers who rise to greatness, Victor Hugo gave birth in his early days to a number of writings, the titles of which never appear in the list of his works, even when they are recounted by his most admiring friends. Such juvenile obscurities are 'Roland et la Chevalerie,' a book of poems; 'Irtamène,' a tragedy, the last line of which, by-the-by, shows strong traces of Hugo's royalist bringing up—

'Quand on hait les tyrans, on doit aimer
les rois.'

Several other poems and tragedies were evolved from this precocious boy, but all are unknown until we

arrive at 'Han d'Islande,' composed when he was nineteen. This, say his friends, was the first cry of revolt of the young eagle.

The young eagle lived for some years in his cottage with his wife, as quietly as paired birds usually live, and happily. An amusing little story is told, which may illustrate his life at this period. The poet, his wife, and little boys, used to take walks in the fields about their cottage. One evening they ascended a knoll, whereon was a windmill swaying its monstrous arms. Victor Hugo offered to bet that he would lay hold of one of them, and, hanging on to it, would make a revolution in the air. Madame screamed, and so her husband renounced his projected aerial voyage. But, to prove that the thing was possible, he threw his wife's handkerchief upon a mounting wing, and ran round to the other side of the mill to catch it coming down. All at once, in the mill itself, there opened a skylight; a mocking face appeared, it was followed by an outstretched hand; and Madame's cambric and lace, ere her husband could get round, had become the prey of the miller, who closed his window again with a burst of laughter. Some stout country girl that evening doubtless had a pretty present from her floury lover.

Friends soon began to surround Victor Hugo in his cottage home. He began to think, and to be looked upon by those that surrounded him, as a master. True evidences of his genius rapidly manifested themselves. He began to offend critics of taste, and to set on edge the teeth of decorous keepers of academic canons. He commenced his series of romantic dramas, wherein some high spirit, some young enthusiasm, some modern vitality, were permitted to

abide in opposition to the heavy classical unrealities of the orthodox writers. These gentry shrugged their shoulders at first, and the press amused itself with the new school; but as the power and influence of these iconoclastic heretics began to manifest itself in growing enthusiasms, a battle between the two parties began in earnest.

Hugo must have worked hard in those days; he produced simultaneously, lyrics, dramas, and romances. In 1832, Sainte-Beuve was reviewing his novels as a whole, and pronounced 'Notre Dame,' the last written, to be the first of a series of truly great romances, which the author was destined to continue in the future. With 'Notre Dame' commences, doubtless, the acquaintance of the average English reader with Victor Hugo. This work was written without interruption, its author availing himself of Balzac's plan of composing. He shut himself up from convivial friends, and lived in his work. He locked up his dress-clothes, and, clothed in a 'bear-skin'—we have seen an English novelist at work wrapped up in a huge blanket—dreamed and wrote. It is even said that he bought a bottle of ink to begin with, which was drained dry with the last chapter; and that hence arose the well-known expression for a book—'Ce qu'il y a dans une bouteille d'encre,' which saying Hugo afterwards made over to one of his friends, who wished to utilize it as the title of a series of works. Professor de Morgan could not bear a fire near him when he had any abstruse intellectual operation before him; but was wont then to sit wrapped up in an overcoat. Hugo, on the contrary, likes a big fire and an open window when he works.

Victor Hugo was driven out of his rural cottage. Paris, like London, kept running into its suburbs with more and more bricks and mortar. Trees were cut down, and the fields long associated with pleasant walks began to grow crops of scaffolding poles. For a time Hugo lived in a house in the Champs Elysées, whence he migrated, in 1830, to the Place Royale, to a splendid old mansion, where he lived for fifteen years. His novel of 'Notre Dame,' says some critic, saved mediæval art in France, and gave archæology a lyrical impulse. His Parisian abode seems to have been a mediæval and archæologic embodiment. Here Hugo reigned as king, with a very distinguished court.

In 1848, Hugo entered the political arena and was elected a representative, of course on the revolutionary side; for his ideas had been gradually developing from the time that his mother's influence was removed and he entered into the wide world.

In 1851, after the Coup d'État, Hugo went into exile, proceeding first to Brussels and thence to England. He has no great affection for London. He came thither in December 1851—an unpleasant month for an exile's tour—but found the fogs too much for him. 'God, who has taken our country from us, should not quite withdraw the sun as well,' said he.

After England he proceeded to Jersey, where in

'A spare white house of unaccustomed form,

On barren clifflands scarred by wrathful storm,'

he lived in tranquillity for several years. Some small difficulty arising in connection with the government and another refugee, a friend of his, he exchanged Jersey for Guernsey in 1855. Since that

date he has had his home in that charming island, making occasional visits to Brussels. On Napoleon's fall he returned to Paris, and continued there during the siege, but he appears now to have gone back for good to his exile-home, though few weeks pass without some words of his, of letter or message, being published in Paris.

Whatever political weaknesses he may be guilty of, he deserves the credit of writing novels steadily. In 1861 he was writing, from a village near Waterloo, to Auguste Vacquerie, a great friend of his:—

'Dear Auguste, this morning, 30th of June, at half past eight, with a fine sun in my windows, I have finished 'Les Misérables.' Since that work, have appeared 'Les Travailleurs de la Mer' and 'L'homme qui rit,' both of which, probably, are nearly as well known in England as in France. Ten years ago, one of his reviewers referred to a work of his as brought out "after forty-three years of action, at the theatre, the tribune, the press; after the production of ten volumes of poems, three of dramas, six of romantic or philosophical works, and eleven years of exile." Hugo is now three score and ten, but hale enough to take two hundred sea-baths a year, which must be nearly one a day during the time he is at home.

In practical matters Hugo seems always to have had a quiet power of getting his own way. When quite a young man, as artistic leader of a new and heretical clique, he had much to fight against from the powers that be. His plays being, as they were, 'an energetic revelation of what height of daring one may attain to on the boards,' not seldom came under official interdict. And,

what was even worse, actors revolted against the expressions assigned to them—the language was too forcible. Such verbal audacities as this—

‘Horrible compagne,
Dont le menton fleurit et dont le nez
trogonne,’

shocked the gallery as much as they disturbed the mincing mouths of the actors in uttering them. There was one actress between whom and the author there was a regular trial of strength. It was Mdlle. Mars, who affected culture and critical faculty. At the reading of ‘Hernani’ she sat in dignified hauteur, and crunched burnt almond. As the young dramatist read the words—

‘Moi, je suis fille noble et de ce sang
jalouse,
Trop pour la concubine et trop peu
pour l’épouse,’

a voice interrupted him saying: ‘Favorite.’ The author raised his head and looked towards Mdlle. Mars. She had her eyes fixed on the ceiling, and her fingers in her confit-box. He thought there was some mistake, and recommenced. Again there was the same interruption. ‘Is it you,’ at length he asked, ‘who do me the honour to interrupt me?’ She answered in the affirmative. ‘You think, then, that the word *favorite* would advantageously replace that of *concubine*?’ ‘I am sure of it. We have never said “concubine” at the theatre.’ ‘Then it shall be said for the first time, madame,’ answered Hugo; ‘one word gives force to my thought—the other would weaken it.’ She tried to impress upon the obstinate author that the public were certain to hiss, but he persisted in his design. At the very last moment, when the piece was being brought out publicly, she went to her opponent

just before it was her turn to go on the stage, and asked, impudently, if he still refused to expunge the offending word. He told her that the public would be quite within its right if it were to hiss, but that she was not in her right in interrupting proceedings. So the matter dropped, but this was not the last pestering he had to undergo at the hands of the fashionable actress. We have reproduced the story, as it serves as a representative one, and marks the opposition between the old and new school; the one taking refuge in conventionality, the other striking out boldly, and calling a spade a spade.

One act of unusual audacity we ought to place to the credit of Victor Hugo. He firmly refused a large pension offered him in connection with an interdict which had been placed upon one of his dramas.

Victor Hugo is an example of the vast power of the novel as a literary instrument. Where one person in England has read his poems or followed his speeches, a hundred know something of his novels. This is by no means because he writes better novels as novels than poems as poems; but because of the superior penetrating power of the great modern literary engine, the novel. Though we may not be able to say with M. Pelletan, as he spoke when proposing Hugo as a toast at a banquet, that ‘the romance can correct the false positivism of the statesman, by opposing to the diplomacy of politics the eternal verity of the human heart;’ yet there is no doubt that a large and broad undercurrent of real power and influence attends the circulation of a high-class novel strongly impregnated with ideas. The novel may not be in England the enemy of the statesman, but it is

the terrible rival of the drama and the sermon.

It has been said of Hugo that his fictions afford in literature the species of interest resulting in vulgar life from the spectacle of an execution. There is a certain truth in this accusation; there is, in several of his novels, an intense and straining excitement which arises from the contemplation of abnormal and unusual passions. In 'Notre Dame,' for instance, we have the infatuation of two men for one woman, running through the story. There is nothing very unusual in the idea, taken simply as we have put it, but when one of love's madmen is a celibate priest, and the other a hideous hunchback, and the girl a gipsy dancing-girl, and the loves not open and healthy, but of the morbid, gloating kind, we feel that there is a fascination about the book which if not actually demoniacal in its nature, is yet such as we find it almost a necessity to exorcise. In 'By Order of the King,' a similar instance of such demoralised passion is to be found in the bath-chamber scene, between the Duchess and the 'grinning man.'

But Hugo's intensities of style are more often noble than ignoble.

The sort of people, too, that make so terrific a romance, for instance, as 'Le Dernier Jour d'un Condamné,' not only necessary but good, are the members of that very large class, the fat-witted, who have never had their feelings awakened to the pitch of sympathy with anything outside themselves. Such people are well described as those who 'would condemn a fellow creature to death with little deliberation, rather than go longer than usual without their dinner, but would be mightily shocked, and talk of harrowing their feelings, should any one seek to force

upon them a consideration of the real amount of suffering which they had inflicted, or were about to inflict.' Some have called such works of Victor Hugo, 'a long nightmare;' but the author seems always to have before his vision the heavy bourgeois temperament, that nothing short of a horrible night-equine impression can sting into anything like feeling. However, Hugo was the leader of the Romantic School, and his works, where he strives the most, 'se complaire avec une sorte de sensualité à faire savourer au lecteur toutes les angoisses de la douleur morale ou physique,' do but mark the intensity of the reaction against the smooth-lacquered nothingnesses of the old classical literary regime, and the deadness of the feelings which he set himself to teach to move.

In spite of the tendency to vagueness and formlessness in the emotions he depicts, and the 'piling up of agony' which detracts from the effect of his books upon the practical, commonplace reader, by its appearance of being overstrained, there is a strange fascination in Hugo's writings. They are vertiginous, and produce a weird cerebral excitement. Mr. Wilkie Collins's books produce something of the same sensation, and are apt to carry away the reader in an unquiet whirl; but Hugo's intensities are grander and more lasting in their influence. The latter half of the 'Toilers of the Sea' may afford an example of what we mean.

Hugo has not been the best possible teacher for the French nation; his practicable political ideas have too often excited them in the path of their distinctive passions, shallow pride, and infatuation for what they denominate glory. His purer and higher thoughts have been too pure and

high, too spiritually ideal for the average French mind, which vibrates between dense materialism with its scoffing scepticism, and sensuous religion with its weak devoteism. But when he draws a political picture for Frenchmen, and describes the stones on the left bank of a particular river as crying out, 'Il faut que la France reprenne le Rhin,' they were, unfortunately, able to comprehend his meaning only too well. If they had remembered also what he said in 1839, 'Prussia is on the advance,' perhaps they might have gained good as well as evil from his counsels.

Victor Hugo has two natures. In one, the lower nature, he has all a Frenchman's weaknesses, his unsteadiness of purpose, his childish excitability, his mad gaieties, his depressions, his demoralisation. But above this lower nature he has a life more serene and pure, a life of poetry and spirituality, of deep insights and celestial intuitions, a life of true moral passion and earnestness. He may not be angelic as a man, but an angelic shoot is somehow grafted in him. In his French moods he is often unreasonable and hysterical; when he is sufficiently free from excitement to be cosmopolitan, his spirit is that of a noble and high humanitarianism.

Perhaps exile has been good for Hugo in making him less Parisian and more cosmopolitan. 'Exile,' says one writing of him, 'voyage without goal, days without hours, space without air!' Another friend of his was more practically suggestive, if less poetical, in his observations on this topic. It was at a banquet given in Hugo's honour at Brussels, in 1862, that one of his countrymen, adverting to his presence, pointed out that, although his hair was white, his forehead and eye had a calm and

serenity which neither ten years of exile nor manifold incentives to despair and wrath had been able to disturb. On this was naively commented: 'His rock of Guernsey and the sea which environs it, seem to be barriers that our quarrels, our jealousies, our rancours and our feeblenesses are unable to overcome.'

Hugo has a grand idea of doing away with the statesman or middle-man, and bringing the thinker into direct communication with the people much more fully than at present. The idea is a fine one, but it is to be feared that men's bosoms, at all events in France, are too easily inflammable and too little self-regulative for it to be developed at present in politics with safety.

Of one thing Hugo cannot complain, that he has been without enthusiastic admirers. With regard to the chapter in 'Les Misérables,' where Jean Valjean is struggling with himself respecting his duty of descending from his position as a man of wealth and respectability to his old criminal name and standing, in order to save the unfortunate who had been mistaken for him; one of these admirers says that the strife is more grand, terrible, and imposing than Waterloo: 'In the one there are 200,000 men, in the other there is humanity.'

Financially, too, Victor Hugo must have been well appreciated, for his great works have a prodigious circulation. 'Les Misérables,' it is said, appeared the same day at Paris, Brussels, Leipsic, London, Milan, Madrid, Rotterdam, Warsaw, Pesth, Rio de Janeiro. There were three editions in French, one at Paris of fifteen thousand copies, one at Brussels of twelve thousand, and a third at Leipsic of three thousand copies. There were also

nine or ten translations, viz., into English, German, Italian, Spanish, Dutch, Polish, Hungarian, Portuguese. In Spanish there were two versions, one of which was published in Paris with one thousand six hundred and fifty copies, the other in Madrid with five thousand. 'Han d'Islande' was sold for three hundred francs; four hundred thousand, it is said, were bid for 'Les Misérables.'

Large sums, it is plain, are made by Hugo for his writings; but, on the other hand, he spends freely. One of the best evidences that the humanitarian passion, which is the highest element of his character, is genuine and true in him, is that he loses no opportunity of carrying his principles into practice. Whether it be a political cause that he is favouring, or the poor of Guernsey that he is succouring, he gives with no niggard hand. In his humanitarianism he is always consistent, always the same, whether in his writings or his life. He is always pleading eloquently in favour of the disinherited of this world, always looking out for the weak and uncared for, with tender solicitude. It is at the proud and the strong alone that he incessantly strikes, deeming received opinions not necessarily infallible, success not necessarily great, and those in high places not necessarily noble. But his spirit of defiance of the 'principalities and powers' is one of chivalry, not of jealousy. The motto graven upon the walls of his home is 'Gloria victis, vix nemini,' which is good Christianity as opposed to the 'Vix victis' of old.

Hugo's poems, when they are not 'Chatiments,' are often rather ordinary and monotonous, especially among his earlier ballads and odes. But there are exceptions enough among all to prove

him a genius. There are, even amongst the smallest, absolute gems of lyrical art; and there are many exquisite blendings of pathos and poetic elegance, marked with a stamp that is Hugo's alone. Let us take for example a poem referring to the fine old journalist, M. Bertin, who, when Louis Philippe asked to see him, replied with genuine politeness and most praiseworthy candour, 'The king is very well off at Versailles, and I am very well off at Les Roches: were he to come here, we might both feel uncomfortable.' This M. Bertin lived in a pretty country villa, where he kept open house always. He oppressed his visitors by no conventionalities, but left all free to amuse themselves as seemed best to each, reserving the same privilege of liberty for himself. Being an old man, he had one day fallen asleep whilst reading in the garden. Thus Victor Hugo must have seen him, and so have gained the suggestion which is so exquisitely rendered as follows:—

'Et du fond de leur nid, sous l'orme et
sous l'érable
Les oiseaux admiraient sa tête vénérable,
Et, gais chanteurs tremblants,
Ils guettaient, s'approchaient et sou-
haitaient dans l'ombre,
D'avoir, pour augmenter la douceur
du nid sombre,
Un de ses cheveux blancs.

A fit pair to this, in its peculiar elegance, would be the poem where a maiden is promised 'a green robe in April;' and it comes to her in the springing of green buds over her grave.

To make a reputation in poetry, Hugo need have done no more than the 'Légende des Siècles,' which is his greatest and most sustained poetical work.

Looking upon Hugo from the points of view of politics, philosophy, poetry and romance, we

were almost forgetting that he has another faculty still. There is a book published as the work of Victor Hugo, in which, as says its editor, the late Théophile Gautier, there is neither chapter, nor ode, nor prose, nor verse; and yet it is always the great poet who holds the pen. The work consists, in fact, of a series of weird drawings, 'vague profiles of souvenirs, visions seen across a fog, chimeras of fantasy, and fortuitous caprices of a careless hand.' They would be done with a little ink or a little coffee on an old envelope, or the first scrap of paper that came. His friends would seize upon them so soon as done, and a few of them, having been collected, form the volume we are speaking of. As might be expected, these drawings are full of a mysterious ideality. They love cloud more than precision, and express feeling rather than form. Some of them out-Doré Doré for gloom and grand ghastliness. Some seem to give forth a positively frightful melancholy, while others breathe a soft gentleness;—cool gleams of morning are showing on the trees, river, and church spire of a little village. 'A souvenir of a fog' is wonderfully suggestive, and over a drawing entitled 'Amica silentia' seems to brood a dark lowering atmosphere of elf-land. 'One of my castles in Spain' gives us an old Moorish building of strange grotesqueness. M. Hugo is particularly fond of mottoes. Another drawing bears one for its title, 'Homo lapides, nubes deus;' in this we have lofty battlements and towers pushed proudly up into a sombre sky, across which is a wild whirl of cloud. An unwearied walker is M. Hugo, his friend tells us; 'Pensive and mysterious rover, always accompanied by the muse, he loves to surprise solitude in the abandon

of its secret attitudes, to come close to nature during hours when, expecting no one, she remains *en déshabillé*, and does not compose her features. He wanders across the meadows when, under the crimsons of evening, the files of the poplars take strange profiles, and resemble processions of phantoms; and in the morning, when the shudder of dawn makes quiver the old convulsive elm by the side of a road bathed in shadow, a passing dreamer has remarked this black tremulousness on the livid whiteness of the aurora, and you will find it in a strophe or a drawing. The poet possesses that visionary eye of which he speaks with respect to Albert Dürer; he sees things by their bizarre angle, and the life hidden under the forms reveals itself to him in its mysterious activity.'

M. Hugo would have declined to allow his little drawings to be published, but it came to his mind that the profits of their sale might contribute to form the 'civil list' of his little indigent children. We have most of us heard of his kindness to the poor of Guernsey. In this volume of designs is printed M. Hugo's letter to the publisher, M. Castel, which will give us a graphic picture of his system of charity. 'Every week, poor mothers do me the honour of bringing their children to dine with me. I had eight at first, then fifteen, now' (this was in '62) 'I have twenty-two. These children dine together. They are all mixed, Catholics, Protestants, English, French, Irish, without distinction of creed or nation. I invite them to joy and to laughter, and I say to them: Be free. We begin and terminate the repast by a form of thanks to God, simple and outside of all religious formulas that might entangle the conscience. My wife, my daughter, my sister-in-law, my sons, my ser-

vants and I, we wait upon them. They eat meat and drink wine, two great necessities for childhood. After which they play, then go to school. Catholic priests, Protestant ministers, mingled with free-thinkers and proscribed democrats, come often to see this humble supper, and it does not seem to me that any one goes away dissatisfied. . . . This is not alms, it is fraternity. This penetration of indigent families into ours does good to us as well as to them. . . . We learn to be of use to them, and they learn to bear goodwill to us.'

Victor Hugo has made a wonderful show-place of his Guernsey house. It is a sort of Wardour Street repository, drawn from the palaces of France. When we visited it in 1868 and 1871, we saw a table that had been the property of Charles the Second; part of a state bedstead of Francis the First; a service of crockery presented by Charles the Tenth. There were also bed-room tapestries from Fontainebleau, as well as embroidery from the needle of La Pompadour. Perhaps now, 1872, Victor Hugo may have added to his poetical curiosity shop a bit of furniture from the Tuileries, as a memento of his old enemy 'Napoléon le petit.' What changes and chances these two men have seen! In June 1848, Victor Hugo, Louis Napoleon, and M. Thiers were all being voted for together in the Paris elections. Paris has coquetted with the first, has played see-saw with the second, and is now under the heel of the last, and in 1848 the least favoured, of the three.

What with antique oak carvings, tapestried walls, Dutch-tiled fireplaces, statues, mirrors, Chinese porcelain figures, and stray curiosities of all kinds, Victor Hugo's house bears a very unconventional aspect. We can quite understand the feeling of the aristocratic 'Six-

ties' and 'Forties' of Guernsey, in their well-upholstered mansions, looking upon the great man in their midst with some disdain, and as too eccentric to visit with. The great curiosity of all in Hugo's house is the number of maxims and mottoes one meets with everywhere. Carved on oak, embroidered on velvet, embossed on leather, they swarm like Balzac's creditors. They creep out from everywhere: from behind the stove, from out of the chest of drawers; they scale the windows, they attack the doors. These mottoes represent different sides of Victor Hugo's life and thoughts. On a great pinnaced chimney-piece we find a chronological list of earth's benefactors, thus: 'Moïse, Socrate, Christ, Colomb, Luther, Washington;' and Victor Hugo's selection of the greatest of the poets, viz., 'Job, Isaïe, Homère, Eschyle, Lucrèce, Dante, Shakespeare, Molière.' In another place we find an epigram upon a timepiece, relating to the hours:—

'Toutes laissent leur trace au corps
comme à l'esprit,
, Toutes blessent, hélas!—la dernière
guérit.'

Some of the inscriptions have a religious suggestiveness, as where, under a death's head, we find the words, 'Nox, Mors, Lux.' Round one room, on the cornice, runs the following, in carved oak. It is taken from the '*Chansons des rues et des bois*':—

'Le peuple est petit, mais il sera grand,
Dans tes bras sacrés, O mère féconde!
O liberté sainte, au pas conquérant,
Tu portes l'enfant qui porte le monde.'

This is more political in its tendencies. Perhaps the article that strikes a stranger most curiously is a huge wooden chair conspicuously placed by the table in one of the rooms, and with a chain drawn and fixed across its arms.

This is known as 'The chair of the ancestors,' and on it are inscribed the words, 'Les absents sont là.' On the arms of the chair are the names of some departed members of the Hugo family. The great writer's sanctum is at the very top of the house, a sort of attic room walled with glass on two sides, and from which may be seen the finest view in Guernsey; as at this height one seems to have the blue sea immediately below and around. Here, in a corner of the room, is a small deal writing-table, and here, or just above on the parapet, M. Hugo, or his great felt hat, may be discerned very early in the morning by the passer-by.

We translate a fragment from a French parody of 'L'Homme qui rit,' which will do as a foil to the description of Hugo's house. 'Ursus,' it will be observed, shares his author's passion for mural inscriptions:—

'The cabin of Ursus was simply furnished. Besides a pitcher which served him for pillow, the furniture was composed only of two leaves of paper pasted upon the wainscot, and upon which were traced with the hand two inscriptions that we could detail in sixteen pages, but that we shall translate in five lines, our work not being bound to be bought for 300,000 francs by the publisher Lacroix. Here is the sense of the inscriptions: The barons, peers, viscounts, and marquises of England, they are *canaille*! as regards the dukes, princes, judges, and lords, it is absolutely the same thing. The 172 peers reigning under James II. possessed amongst themselves alone the eleventh part

of the revenues of England. This is not fun for the thirty millions of English who are not peers.'

Hugo is one of the few among the extreme party in politics who are broad enough to entertain and daring enough to avow a love for anything antique. In his leanings towards antiquarianism he is consistent and unchangeable. M. Charles Hugo tells a story of his father, when flying, after the *Coup d'État*. It appears that he arrived in Brussels with but a small sum of money in his pocket, and found his attention arrested by a curiosity shop, where he saw an old dish of remarkable chased work. He inquired the price, and found it amounted to the sum he had in his pocket. Without thinking of what he was to make his dinner of, he bought the dish. The same faculty of taste that caused him, a new-made exile, to spend his last piece of gold upon a curious dish, doubtless impelled him to his poetic protest against the demolition of the Column last year.

Hugo has earned, and will keep, his place as a European celebrity. This is a bad time to judge him; for he lost ground with many of his admirers for his too effervescent eloquence during the war. But who could think calmly and at his best, with his country steeped in blood and disgrace, and with the boom of cannon and the horror of shells filling his beautiful city, so long worshipped as almost a goddess in the world? Victor Hugo is not quite one of the 'eternal men,' but among terrestrial stars his orb shines forth large, luminous, and many coloured.

KENINGALE COOK.



IRISH EYES.

IRISH Eyes ! Irish Eyes !

Eyes that most of all can move me—

From my book

Lift the look

Through your lashes dark and prove me,

In my worship, O how wise !

Other orbs, be content,

In your honour not dispraisal,

Most I prize

Irish Eyes,

Since were not your ebon, hazel,

Sapphire all to light them, lent ?

So no mischief, merry Eyes !

Stars of thought no jealous fancies

Can I err

To prefer

This sweet union of your glances

Sparkling, darkling Irish Eyes ?

ALFRED PERCEVAL GRAVES.



Drawn by W. Rice Buckman.]

IRISH EYES.

MY ENGLISH FRIENDS.*

H. C. Chabot, Esq., M.A.

HENRY EUGENE CHABOT, M.A., understood to be an Irish gentleman, and a distinguished newspaper-writer, was, truly speaking, not more an Irishman than I am. He did not know himself to what nationality he really belonged. But since every man must belong to some place, and since he had chosen to call himself an Irishman, we will grant him this, after all, not very exorbitant claim. It is clear enough from what country his name comes, and people generally believed that he could very easily trace his connection with the celebrated dukedom of Rohan-Chabot. But he himself never cared to do so, on many grounds, of which the first was that he had not a penny in the world.

His grandfather left France at the time of the great Revolution—losing, of course, everything—and went to Italy, where he entered some profession, married a Spanish lady, and had a son, who in his turn went to Germany to study medicine, married a Hungarian lady, and got an appointment as house-surgeon to some rich landlord in Ireland. This Hungarian wife of a Franco-Spaniard, born in Italy and educated in Germany, took it into her head to make her husband a present of a son, without even waiting until the Irish shores were reached. She gave birth to my friend on board an Irish steamer, and that is how he became an Irishman.

* The first four sketches of this series appeared in the 'Globe' some eighteen months ago. They have no pretension of being anything beyond mere cartoons for a larger picture in course of preparation.—A. B.

The mixed blood of Chabot's veins proved able to adapt itself remarkably well to all climates and surroundings. He grew up strong and healthy in the cold and damp Irish capital; and, being a Catholic, was looked upon at the University of Dublin almost as a genuine Irishman. His father and mother both died before he had finished his studies, leaving him two or three thousand pounds, which he spent almost to the last penny in travelling, after his M.A. had been secured. I became acquainted with him some eight years ago, when he spoke French like a Parisian, Italian like a citizen of Firenze, German like an Alsatian, and English with a brogue of which any Irishman could be proud. Thanks to this versatility, he was able, when all his money was spent, to secure for himself the position of foreign sub-editor on one of the papers of very large circulation, a position considered by the editor of that paper to be one of great responsibility, and therefore remunerated at the high salary of three pounds a week. Having, however, a good many foreign journals at his disposal, and being well acquainted with continental life and institutions, Chabot began in his leisure hours to write articles for some other papers, soon became known, and got, in about a year's time, an appointment as leader-writer on 'The Hour,' at a salary of eight-hundred a year. The career of the man was quite made now. The Athenæum was thrown open to him; the Quarterlies courted him, and the enterprising editors of such organs as could not secure

his services, exerted, at all events, their best efforts to secure the presence of his person at their dinner and evening parties. When the war broke out, Chabot had no end of proposals to go abroad; for a couple of days he was exposed to something like an auction on the part of various competing newspaper-managers, and accepted the post on that journal which gave him liberty to go to the French side, and the right to 'sympathise' with the French. 'It is, after all, the least I can do for the country I ought to belong to, and for which I ought to fight now if I had not turned out an Irishman,' thought he. And so he and I went together in July 1870, to Metz, and, like all correspondents on the French side, were constantly moving in the dark, constantly threatened to be shot by those whom we wished to serve, and constantly outdone by the facilities our *confrères* enjoyed on the German side.

Some six years prior to the events described here, Chabot, then a young and jolly fellow of eight-and-twenty, was living in Paris. He had spent there already a sufficiently long time to form some connections, and to be seen wherever *tout Paris* was to be seen; and so one evening he was at the Opera on the occasion of some gala performance. The house was crammed with all sorts of celebrities of the *beau monde*, of which he knew a good many by sight and name; but the front of the box of the Duc de M——, that chief pillar of the Empire, was occupied by two ladies, both of whom struck him by their beauty, but neither of whom he could remember to have ever seen. The one, tall, slim and fair, dressed in sky-blue and snow-white, with a dazzling diadem on her head, seemed to be the fairy queen of

some unknown land of poetry and love. The other, breathing health and strength, with two large piercing eyes, dark and brilliant as jet, with nothing to adorn her head but a few diamond stars, drowned in the richest hair a woman ever possessed, attracted everybody's attention, by her charms as well as by her satin costume of yellow and cherry red, which heightened still more the beauty of her radiantly southern complexion. She seemed to be a woman intended as a companion to Hercules in those rare moments when that virtuous myth did not prefer virtue to pleasure. Chabot could not turn away his opera-glasses from that box. 'Who can they be?' thought he. 'Neither can be the Duke's wife, for it's known that he never allows her to go alone into society. He would have been there. They must be some foreign deities, fresh from the railway-station. I wonder only that the papers did not say anything about them this morning.' And he resolved to have the question settled at once, were it even at the obvious risk of showing himself an ignoramus. Alfred D'Artin, of the '*Figaro*,' just passing by and going to shake hands with him, was, of course, turned to account.

'Mais d'où sortez-vous, mon cher! Ce sont les épouses du Duc de M——.'

'How *les épouses*? Which is the real one?'

'Both are most real, as you see. The fair and beautiful Russian, who never makes a step without making a blunder, is the legitimate one. The dark and splendid creole, who never makes a blunder that is not a step, is just as legitimate a one, though not the Duke's.'

'Well, I know, D'Artin, how witty you always are. But you must know, too—and you have

made me feel it already—how ignorant I am. Now enlighten me, please. Who are these ladies?—or, at least, who is the creole?

'Parbleu! but it's the Comtesse de Pellet. With the Duke she takes the place of the Duchess; with the Duchess she takes the place of the Duke. Have you never seen her before? *Tout Paris* speaks of her. C'est une femme très distinguée. Her husband has just been sent off to Mexico on a special mission. The Emperor dislikes her a little, but it's simply because he is afraid of her influence on M——. When the Duke cannot himself chaperon the beautiful but somewhat awkward Muscovite, the Countess does it. Should you intend to get some day into a scrape, or have some business to transact with the Government, I give you the advice to try and get the Countess's door thrown open to you. You would be pretty safe then. Bon-soir, mon cher; I am in a hurry.'

Chabot did not expect to get into any scrape, or to have any business with the French Government, but he would certainly have given a good deal to get at the Countess. Although the brief biographical notice he had just been supplied with was not of a very attractive or encouraging nature, a splendid woman, wrapped in yellow and cherry-red, stood for several nights by his bedside; every friend with whom he had to talk for the next few days had to say or to hear something about the Countess; and every elegant woman with dark hair that passed through the *Bois* at the fashionable hours, was sure to be anxiously stared at during the whole of that week. Chabot had been obviously struck by a current of that unknown force which some people call affinity, others fatality, but which is always sure to leave upon

a man of Chabot's nature a lasting, if not an ineffaceable impression. Had Chabot remained any longer in Paris, he would probably have managed, one way or the other, to get an admission into the drawing-room of the Countess; and would very likely have soon seen that it was a place where, as Balzac says, there were committed in a single evening more crimes in thoughts and words than any criminal court has ever punished, and where no man could move without exposing himself to the double danger of getting effeminated and materialized at the same time. But circumstances arranged it that my friend had to leave Paris within a few weeks after the aforesaid fatal night at the Opera; while the fact that his banker's account was speedily drawing towards a close, made him soon busy with matters which did not leave much room for reminiscences, however pleasant. And by-and-by the speedy literary success he obtained, together with political, newspaper, and club interests, and the whole of the London atmosphere, made him apparently quite forget the yellow and cherry-red mirage.

More than five years had passed. Chabot had become one of the most distinguished writers of what is considered the first press in the world. He was then a little over thirty years of age; enjoyed an income of about a thousand a year, and was as free of debts or family encumbrances as an Alpine eagle. The defeat of the French during August 1870, and the loss of prestige which he naturally incurred, together with the cause of which he had made himself the advocate, were, since the death of his parents, the first real griefs he had ever experienced. They rendered him morose, and taciturn to a degree which astonished all his fellow workmen who happened to

meet him during his pilgrimage, and which was a matter of long comment in the smoking-room of the Hôtel du Rhin, at Amiens, where a large company of 'Specials' and 'Our owns,' driven back from Paris, Sedan, and Châlons, was assembled on an evening at the end of October. This asylum Chabot also reached by-and-by, and, the first evening of his arrival, after having shaken hands with several of these gentlemen, he retired to his room under pretence of strong headache, but in reality for the purpose of writing another letter attempting to prove all the chances of success the French still possessed, and all the improbability of Paris, and still less Amiens, ever being taken. On the next day, however, he would not be allowed to have headache again, for his friends wanted to know what he thought of the state of affairs; and so a row of half-a-dozen chairs was turned up at the table-d'hôte long before the dinner began, and a few bottles of champagne ordered to be kept in ice for 'les Anglais.'

'Who is that lady in black?' asked he of J. G. Pearson, of the 'Morning Telegram,' pointing to a woman sitting rather isolated, and at the end of a table at which something like fifty sad-looking provincial people were closely packed.

'It's Marguerite Bellanger,' replied Pearson, who had earned on his paper a great reputation for knowledge of everything about the Tuileries. 'She is staying here under the assumed name of Countess Something.'

'I can assure you it is not the Bellanger. I have seen that celebrity several times. She is fair, and by no means so stout,' said Chabot.

'But she may have got stouter since, and may have dyed her hair.

At all events, it is some *bouche inutile*, as they very appropriately call them now. . . And so you say that General Faidherbe is to take the command, to move on Amiens to strengthen us, and to advance, perhaps, still farther. That's very important, I think,' said Pearson, and began to describe all the advantages Amiens now presented as a point of observation, while Chabot was endeavouring to recollect where he had seen the lady in black. But he had not to trouble himself long with this question, for the landlord stood already behind his chair with the travellers' book in his hand, and the request that 'monsieur' would be so kind as to give him his passport, and to write down his name, profession, nationality, and destination. No sooner did Chabot take the book in his hands than he saw the name of La Comtesse de Pellet, written in clear French handwriting.

'Is this lady gone?' asked he of the landlord.

'Non, monsieur. She is sitting opposite you at the other end of the table. And the eyes of Chabot and the Countess met, as the landlord pointed with his pen to where she sat.

There is scarcely any need to say that on the very next day, at breakfast, an occasion presented itself for Chabot to speak to the Countess. Newspapers and letters being distributed, every one began to communicate the news he got; and Chabot, to whom several copies of English papers were handed, and who no longer sat so far away from the Countess, managed somehow to have a question or two put to him concerning what the 'Times' was saying. And whilst she was thus speaking to him, Chabot tried to recollect those features which struck him once as being so beautiful. But five or

six years of Parisian life under the Empire mean a good deal—and creoles into the bargain soon get old. So what was health and strength then, could be easily called stoutness now; the dark, formerly piercing eyes, had something lazy and languishing about them; the bright colours which once played through the sun-burnt satin skin, were almost wan now; there were even a couple of slight wrinkles to be traced on the forehead. But Chabot could, not, of course, be expected to enter into all these details; and though some change had been ascertained even by him, he attributed it chiefly to the anxiety which every Frenchwoman was then exposed to. The fact that people seemed to fly from the Countess, and to speak of her as of a *bouche inutile*, revolted him, and he thought it was his duty as a gentleman to exonerate the Countess from any unfavourable suspicions by showing her the greatest possible respect. The lady herself, quite unconsciously, facilitated him in this work. Highly pleased by his irreproachable French, she soon asked him whether he was really an Englishman.

‘I am an Irishman, madame; but of French origin. My name is Chabot.’

‘Well, I knew you could not be English. For me Irish or English is all the same. You are French to all intents and purposes. Chabot is one of our best names. I am the Countess de Pellet,’—and stretching him out her hand, which Chabot had a great mind to kiss, but which he contented himself with simply shaking. But this conversation, besides the immediate advantageous impression it produced on the few persons present in the dining-room, gave Chabot the right to declare all that had been whispered about

the Countess to be a positive calumny, and to sit by her side at dinner. Since he sat there, his friends did so too, and the Countess, quite isolated but yesterday, had now a little court of English journalists around her. She presented to these gentlemen more than the mere attraction of a handsome and clever woman, for without alluding in any way as to what he knew concerning the Duc de M——, Chabot told his friends that the Countess was an influential person among Imperialists; and, consequently several of the ‘specials’ thought that they might get out of her some information that would, perhaps, repay their efforts to make themselves agreeable. The sitting-room of the Countess was, therefore, pretty full in the evenings, and the lady whom the provincial mamas knew for certain to be Marguerite Bellanger, was now suddenly transformed into the Countess de Pellet, a very dangerous person, in constant communication with English journalists, who, as everybody knew, were hostile to France.

On one of such evenings, the company remained together rather late. The Empire, Gambetta, the visit of Thiers to the European courts, the rumours of an armistice, the taking and retaking of Le Bourget, and a good many other topics, were warmly discussed. The Countess was very eloquent, argued more than any of her guests, seemed to know everything, and to be strongly disinclined to listen to any one. Those who attempted to say a word in favour of the Republic or of the government of the Fourth of September, had to stand a torrent of words which might have been fairly called a scolding. Chabot got the worst of it; for, besides being by his ideas disposed in

favour of the Republic, he saw the woman brightened and enlivened by the discussion, and his thoughts went, for some reason, back to the opera night, to the Duc de M——, and caused him to dislike the Empire more than ever, and to speak of it in the bitterest terms.

'I believe in Gambetta,' remarked the philosophical representative of the 'Evening News,' 'because what France wants, before everything else, is a man, and Gambetta is a thorough man to the edge of his nails. If France had now a Bismarck of her own, as she had formerly in the person of the Duc de M——, she would never have known her present disasters.'

'Certainly not,' retorted the Countess, 'but please don't compare the Duc de M—— to a *petit sauteur*, like Monsieur Gambetta, (she mockingly insisted upon the double *s*).

'You seem to have a very high opinion of the defunct Duke, Madame la Comtesse,' said Chabot, with a slight, almost imperceptible touch of bitterness.

'I hate him as a man. I hold him to have been a villain. But I think no one, not even you, Monsieur Chabot, hostile though you be to the Imperialists, will deny his having been a man of genius.'

The clock on the mantel-piece struck twelve, and made the Countess suddenly break off the controversy by half singing and half declaiming—

'Minuit, chrétiens! c'est l'heure solennelle,
Où l'Homme-Dieu descendit jusqu'à nous,
Pour effacer la tache originelle,
Et de son Père arrêter le courroux.'

'We must part, messieurs. It is getting too late,' added she.

'But madame knows, perhaps,

that Englishmen never retire to bed without a prayer,' said Chabot, who became, for some reason or other, almost radiant; 'and since you have just begun one of the most beautiful of hymns, it would be, perhaps, just as well to give the whole of it, and so to show, by praying with us, that you forgive us our political disagreements with you.'

'Oh, no; it would disturb all the sleeping beauties of this hotel, and I should have to contemplate still longer faces than usual at to-morrow's breakfast-table.'

But Chabot as well as his friends insisted so much on having the whole of Adam's 'Noël' sung to them, that the Countess, half annoyed, half pleased, said, as if to herself: 'After all, what does it matter to me what these bourgeois will think?' and threw open her piano. Chabot, being passionately fond of music, and the celebrated 'Noël' being one of his favourite pieces, was burning with delight. And it must be said that the Countess sang it with an expression and in a style that proved more than satisfactory to the whole of the company. 'Bravo! charming! delightful!' fell upon the lady on all sides when she stood up from her piano, brightly coloured by the exertion as much, perhaps, as by a whole host of reminiscences that seemed to have crossed her mind while she was singing.

'I shall really not be able to shut my eyes for the whole of the night,' said Pearson.

'Oh, I should be sorry for that,' answered the Countess; 'though I am sure that your constitution is not one likely to be endangered by a sleepless night. But you see how unfortunate I am. I sang this 'Noël' once at the Madelaine, and people complained of not having been able to pray.

Now you say, you shall not be able to sleep. Still, you must go and try. Bon-soir, messieurs. Cette fois je vous mets carrément à la porte,' and she pushed the whole company outside, much in the same fashion as a shepherd drives a flock of lambs out of a fold.

'Charming woman,' said Pearson, bidding good-night to his friends; 'you seem, Chabot, to be quite in love with her.'

'Don't be afraid for me, dear Pearson,' retorted Chabot, entering his room; but the words, 'a villain,' 'I hate him,' alternately with the splendid sounds of 'Minuit chrétiens! c'est l'heure solennelle,' were resounding in his ears long after he had been in bed and had blown out his candle.

On the next morning, when Chabot was returning to breakfast from a ramble about the fortifications, the hotel maid handed him a card. 'Passez chez moi, S.V.P.' was written in pencil under the name of the Countess. 'Madame la Comtesse is not quite well, and will not go down to the dining-room,' added the servant. Chabot gave her a five-franc piece, and went, apparently quite unconcerned, to join his friends at breakfast, after which he retired under the pretence of having much to write. What was the nature of the conversation which took place between my friend and the creole, I know but vaguely. All that has transpired is, that the lady professed to have been a bearer of some Imperialist communications which she wanted to get through the iron hoop with which the Prussians had already surrounded Paris, and that she expected to have Chabot's assistance in her hazardous project. She addressed herself to Chabot on the plea that he was the only 'vrai gentilhomme' she could see around her, and therefore the only man likely not to

refuse such a request on the part of a lady. She said also that with an English passport and with his position as correspondent of a great English paper to protect them, they could safely venture upon a good many things in which alone, or in company of a Frenchman, she would be frustrated at the very outset, and incur the risk of being shot by the first French or German sentry. Had Chabot even any sympathy for the Imperialist cause he was thus asked to serve, he would at once have seen the impracticability of the plan. But as matters stood, the design appeared to him not only foolish, but almost criminal. His refusal was, therefore, as peremptory as courtesy allowed; but the shrewd creole seemed to have anticipated such a refusal, and to have prepared herself for a long struggle. For more than three hours did she keep her prey under the influence of all the artifices circumstances and her nature placed at her disposal. She complained of being unwell, and she really looked quite pale under the false light of lowered green curtains and of a fire lighted notwithstanding that it was by no means cold as yet. A snow-white dressing-gown and a profusion of black hair falling loose down her shoulders on the arms of the easy chair she sat in, made her appear like some marble bacchante sitting at rest. Chabot was almost captured, and it is by no means certain that he would not have given in, had not the influence of a northern climate, of business-like British training, and of a good deal of materialistic tendencies inherited from his father not come to his rescue. He stood bravely against the boldest attacks, and the enemy began already to lose all hopes of success, when Chabot did a very foolish thing. His nervous system

was so heavily taxed by the trial he was exposed to, that the name of the Duc de M—— dropped from his lips as a final argument for his refusing to give any aid to a cause which would have been his cause, had he been alive still. The whole ground upon which the battle was fought changed instantaneously. All the cunning woman aimed at as yet, was to take in a man whom she thought a stranger to her; while Chabot now disclosed to her, by a single false move, that he had been already taken in years ago, when she would not have thought of looking at him. One could have read on the face of the Countess how the poor man was, in the twinkling of an eye, transformed into the bondsman of the woman to whom he had been as yet but an object of covetousness. Chabot had not time to notice his mistake, as she jumped from her chair and stood close to him, holding both his hands, and whispering, 'You must.'

'No, I shan't,' answered he, almost with a shivering.

'You must,' repeated the woman, still more imperatively, and pressing so closely upon the unfortunate man that, to free himself, he had to throw her back upon her chair and to jump at his hat. But, before he could reach it, the door was locked, and the Countess stood, leaning her back against it in one of those half-studied, half-spontaneous attitudes which are the force of so many French dramatic actresses.

'Well, if it is so,' cried out Chabot, in a voice of real anger, 'then tell me, at least, what is it that you want in Paris. Is it only to rescue some more compromising papers of that pretty couple, your master and mistress? Is it simply to get them more money than they were able to take with them? Or is it really to make

an attempt to throw upon France once more all the corruption, misery, and moral degradation she has so long endured?'

'I hope, *mon cher monsieur*, that you will measure your language when addressing me,' coolly replied the Countess, taking the key out of the door lock and going towards a little Russian leather bag lying on her writing-table. 'Here are the letters. I don't know myself what they contain. They are all sealed, as you see.'

She had scarcely time to say that, and to open the bag, when all the letters, about half a dozen in number, were flying into the fire before Chabot had even taken the trouble to look at them. 'Monsieur, *mais vous êtes fou!*' exclaimed the enraged woman, rushing towards the fire-place to rescue the already smoking papers. But Chabot vigorously stopped her, and a perfect struggle ensued between him and the woman who had but a moment before felt her prey throbbing in her hands. The struggle did not last long. In a minute or two there was no longer any trace of the letters, and the bold creole was lying apparently senseless on the sofa. Chabot was for a moment quite frightened by what he had done; but the aspect of the woman soon recalled him to his senses. He opened the windows, and with the aid of fresh air, water, eau-de-cologne, and the toilette vinegar, managed soon to make the Countess recover. From what I subsequently learned of this lady, I conclude that she would have probably just as soon recovered without any aid. But Chabot did not know this then, and when he heard her saying, on opening her eyes: '*Sortez, monsieur; veuillez me laisser seule,*' he was almost as relieved as if he had seen a friend saved from imminent death. Gently, with al-

most a repenting expression in his face, was he upon this order, about to leave the room, when he noticed that the door would not open. He had, of course, to look for the key; could not find it, and consequently soon discovered himself standing upon his knees by the side of the sofa upon which the Countess was still prostrated.

'You are a true Englishman,' said she, with her eyes still shut, and in answer to all his demands of pardon. 'You have almost killed a woman, ruined all her plans; perhaps, injured the greatest interest of France; and, if the key had been in the door, you would probably be quietly reading the *'Times'* or coldly discussing with your friends the comparative merits of Prussian and French tactics. Oh! how I curse the moment I entertained the idea of speaking to you. . . . My head is a perfect chaos . . . What shall I do, gracious God?' and she seemed quite ready to faint once more under the pressure of her thoughts. Chabot stood all the time by her side, bringing in, now and then, some desultory sentence, or listening to a new reproach. Fully an hour of this unbearable suspense passed before their conversation took something like an intelligible, practical turn. But, not having been present, I am utterly unable to say what its gist was. Pearson was the only person who seemed to have heard something, sitting unnoticed with a couple of provincial French papers, and a worn out *'Guide Joanne'* (his usual sources of information), under the Countess's window, which Chabot had opened. On the very same evening, he had to write a private letter to his editor, pointing out the desirability of a fresh remittance in anticipation of a probable interruption of communications with the

North where an attack of the Prussians was soon expected, and in a post-scriptum to this letter, he added—

'Chabot is thoroughly enjoying himself here. He got hold of some Imperialist Countess, and is now about to despatch her to London, where all the Imperialists are to take their head-quarters. I overheard, by accident, the lady comforting him with the assurance that, though the disastrous war had made her lose everything, she would not fall too heavily upon his pocket; for, should the Empire not be soon re-established, she would take to the operative stage, and most thankfully return him the little outlays he may make for her. If Chabot's people are, as I heard from you, not quite satisfied with his services as special correspondent, they may, perhaps, find a compensation in what he is likely to achieve next season, as a high-life *impresario*.'

There is hardly any need to say what was Pearson's intention in adding this post-scriptum, and that, within forty-eight hours after this letter had been posted, the contents of its post-scriptum were known in every newspaper-office in London, including that of Chabot. Every one seemed to have some interest in spreading it—quite confidentially, of course, and among his most intimate friends only. And the immediate result of this was, that Chabot got, in answer to his next demand for money, a draft for twenty-five pounds only, instead of the usual fifty pounds, and this merely with the manager's compliments, instead of being accompanied, as formerly, by a letter from Dr. Stright himself, the editor, requesting 'my dear Chabot' not to deny himself any comfort, not to expose himself to any unnecessary danger, and to take good care of his health in the

forthcoming bad season. My friend's barometer was evidently falling, and some very nasty weather was pressed to him on his return to London. A vague foreshadowing of this presented itself to me on board the Calais steamer, when I was returning to England in the beginning of 1871. One of our worthy *confrères*, crossing the Channel on the same boat with me, had just left Pearson at Chanzy's headquarters, and, of course, knew all about Chabot's 'losing his *prestige*' and getting entangled with some woman. 'I was told,' said he, that it was a rather grand and romantic sort of affair—some French countess, reduced in circumstances by Bismarck and the needle-gun. But, for a man of Chabot's ideas and temperament, the grander and more romantic the thing is, the worse it becomes, I am afraid. He is sure to go to the dogs. I should be really very sorry for it, he is an exceedingly nice fellow.'

And Chabot did go 'to the dogs,' quietly, speedily, and scarcely noticing his down-hill journey. He had a house at Hammersmith, and was supposed to live there; but in reality, a second-floor studio in Bolton Street was the place where, from early in the morning till late in the evening, he was at the service of the Countess, who managed to make of him a valet and a commissionaire as easily and quickly as if he had been a negro of her native island. She intensely disliked everybody and everything English, could not understand a single word of the tongue of the country, and would not learn it; and if Chabot was not at hand any time he was wanted to speak for her or to serve her, he was sure, on his arrival, to hear most unceremonious reproaches, extravagant demands, and endless abuse of England and the English, with occa-

sional renewal of 'I curse the moment when I had the idea to speak to you!' Chabot often thought, when listening to all this, 'But did I ask her to come? and why does she not go back?' but he never had the courage to give utterance to such thoughts. So that these little, and strictly private, rows were, as a rule, always followed on his part by new concessions and a new increase of expenses, which the Countess, of course, seemed not to notice at all. On her way to London she called at Brussels, where her little daughter and her chambermaid were left in custody of some friends. Both were, of course, taken over. The Countess said she could not live without the dear little thing. Yet, when the little thing was there, it soon turned out that 'la petite m'agace,' and that she must have her own room and a governess to look after her. The governess was selected with as little French as possible, so as to compel the child to learn 'cette détestable langue,' but until the child had begun to know something of English, Chabot had two persons more to attend to, as an interpreter, and occasionally as a reconciler, of the Parisian views of the mother and daughter with the Yorkshire views of Miss Fannylove. Happily enough, the child was a most intelligent one; and in less than six weeks the little girl was not only able to perform all her tricks on Miss Fannylove in fluent English, but to take upon herself a good bit of Chabot's duties as an interpreter; leaving him thus a little more time for rest from the hardest of all penal servitudes—that of attending to the caprices of a spoiled Parisian woman, with high-life pretensions and a beggar's means.

The Yorkshire governess, a French chambermaid, a Scotch page-boy, an Irish house-servant, and a Bri-

tish leader-writer were, however, not the whole of the staff of Countess de Pellet's personal attendants. In addition to these, there was a Don Basilio, maestro di musica, in the person of Signor Frutti, professor of singing; a teacher of the Italian language, the old Signor Tedesco; and an Alsatian lady, Madame Baguette, as accompanist: for the Countess said it was absolutely impossible for an artiste to be at her piano herself during her studies. Chabot, of course, did not wish to show to any one that the money to pay for all this, and for a good many things besides, did not come from the Countess's own pocket; and she had also requested at the outset that everything should be done in her name. Consequently, as long as Chabot could provide the cash wanted, the lady was considered by every one as 'a rather grand sort of affair;' and the words, 'the Countess,' were uttered by all the house people much in the same solemn tone in which the word 'Grace,' or 'the Queen,' is uttered in a select ladies' boarding-school. Some six months passed in this way, things being, apparently, more than 'all right.' The season came on; and the Countess—assuming the *nom de guerre* of Valérie Valo—gave two grand concerts, with the assistance of the best artistes that could be found. The spacious St. John's Hall was quite full on both occasions; and, after the first concert, it was generally acknowledged by the press that the distinguished lady who made, on this occasion, her first appearance before the British public, produced the most favourable impression. The Countess herself said everywhere, and wrote to all her friends in France, that she made 'un début splendide,' and had throughout 'un succès épatant.' Chabot, who gave himself no end of trouble to

arrive at this result, and whom each concert had cost about a hundred pounds, in addition to a couple of weeks of running about, seeing musical critics, sending out tickets, and doing lots of similar work he was quite unaccustomed to, seemed also satisfied with what had been arrived at. The only drawback he felt, but did not wish to acknowledge, was, that about thirty shillings only were taken at the doors on each of the occasions, and that the success of the aspirant was chiefly the result of complimentary dispositions on the part of a public who had nothing to pay for the entertainment. In fact, when Chabot made another round of visits to his friends of the press, with a view to thank them for their notices, those of them who knew anything about music, said to him something that could be easily put in this way: 'Of course, my good fellow, I am always glad to oblige you; but I must say, candidly, that your *protégée* has a good deal more to learn before she can claim to become an artiste. It is all very well for an amateur, and for a drawing-room. But a big hall requires a great deal more. The lady is at present inclined to get out of tune sometimes, and her medium, too, wants more exercise, with a view to see whether it cannot be strengthened a little.' Chabot would, probably, have arrived at the same conclusion if he had been an unconcerned person; but, as matters stood, these remarks almost offended him, and threw cold water upon his relations to a good many of his friends. He attempted, however, quietly to call the Countess's attention to these opinions, in the hope that they would make her exert herself more. But all he could get in answer was, that his friends were asses, who did not understand anything, and that it was highly

rude and improper on his part to come and repeat to an artiste and a 'femme du monde' such stupid and misplaced criticisms. Yet I have reason to believe that the 'femme du monde,' at least, if not the 'artiste,' would not have felt so much offended, if her inclination to go out of tune had alone been mentioned; for, after all, she knew that this was a thing to be remedied by study. But what really vexed her was the allusion to her medium, of which she might have been really proud once, and which, under the influence of suppers and all sorts of other pleasant parties indulged in under the Empire, had become something very like that of Blanche D'Antigny. The Countess was quite aware of that; nothing vexed her more than that; and nothing gave afterwards greater pleasure to Chabot than to be able, in his rare moments of sarcastic disposition, to say, about any elegant French lady he met in the street or the theatres, 'C'est peut-être encore un médium abîmé sous l'Empire.'

Meanwhile all sorts of unpleasant rumours reached me concerning the state of Chabot's affairs. He lost his position almost immediately after his return to London, and it was Pearson that got into his place. Unpaid bills and debts rose on all sides, like mushrooms. He sold out at Hammersmith everything that could be sold, from the lease down to a good many reference books, without which scarcely any work was possible for a journalist. But all this seemed still insufficient to fill the gulf which was already created, and which became larger and larger every day. I did as the great majority of his friends have done—I avoided seeing him, and watched only, through the papers, whether Madame Valérie Valo was not beginning 'to take' somewhere, and whether there was

not at least, in that way, some hope of rescue for the poor man; for I had a hint from Signor Frutti, that the distinguished lady had made up her mind 'de planter là cet imbécile,' as soon as she could see her way clear to the Opera, or anywhere else; and I knew that the day Chabot would have been liberated from the huge parasite which devoured him, he would at once regain all his former brightness, brain-power, and unabating energy for work. Unhappily, the papers gave me always the same information—that for nothing, Madame Valérie Valo could sing as much as she liked in the endless concerts given during the season; but money no one seemed disposed to give her; and so Chabot was now tied to her by misery still more strongly than by the illusions that had attracted him formerly.

Returning to London in September 1871, I did not find the Countess any more in the house; but I found Chabot still in his garret. She went away, signing a rather heavy bill which my friend had to endorse, and for the payment of which his person was to remain a security. But a good many debts remained to be paid outside; and I knew that Chabot was often dining on cold pork, at the public-house of one of the back streets. I met him once going out of such an establishment, in the middle of last winter. He had no overcoat on him, and looked quite shivery; and I was forgetful enough to remark to him, that it was very imprudent on his part to expose his health in that way. 'Well, you are an innocent fellow, Azamat! As if you did not know that I like comfort too much to forget putting on a warm coat when it's cold! My coat is still *au clou* since a memorable evening when I had threepence in my pocket, and when

she would not leave me in peace unless I took her to some theatre, where she again felt dull, because unable to understand a single word.'

'Now, I earnestly hope that all this will be soon over, since you don't see her any more,' said I, by way of mending my misplaced remark.

'Who told you that I don't see her any more? I see her every day as usual.'

'Is it really so? And for how long is it to last?' asked I, quite grieved to learn that the poor fellow was still clinging to the woman who robbed him of mind, soul, body and all. "'The grave alone," says a proverb, "makes the hump-backed straight."'

'Well, we shall see. At all events, you need not take the last hope of the fool away. I have done for her what I should not have done for a daughter, a sister, or a wife, and I don't mind anything that has happened. But I *must* have the satisfaction of knowing that she is an honest woman. Else——' He closed his fist, and a lightning of deep anger crossed his worn out face.

'Look here, my boy, this is quite foolish. You pick up the worst of all imaginable *chevalières d'industrie*—a high-life *chevalière d'industrie* of the second Empire—and wish to make of her a virgin

priestess, or a hard-working English Madonna. Have you forgotten what she used often to say in the moments of her cynical boasting? That she would break down any enemy with two weapons: time and inertia.'

'And you have, probably, forgotten what the invariable repartee of your obstinate Irish friend was on such occasions: "*Qui vivra, verra.*" Good-bye, Azamat. You are getting rather too English, I am afraid.'

I have not since heard of Chabot, nor seen him; but I met the lady twice. On one occasion, Madame Valérie Valo was dining gaily in the company of some lawyers at the Star and Garter; on the other, the Countess de Pellet was parading along Oxford Street on the arm of her husband, who came over from France at her request. She is learning English, and is doing the hypocrite, because she knows that both pay well in England. She is mixing with lawyers, because she is not quite sure that Chabot will not get her into trouble, and thinks she may as well have a few competent persons to back her. But amidst all this, the sharp eye of this worthy descendant of pirates is looking out for some new booty, and for a new barque to carry her to some new country. Let us hope that we may have to bid her an early farewell.

AZAMAT-BATUK.



SLEIGHING IN CANADA.

TO you who have 'seen Naples,' and yet not 'died,' I would say, 'By no means think of doing so until you have seen Canada on such a glorious, rare winter day as smiles down upon us now and then.' The skies, deeply, darkly, beautifully blue, with one or two great heaps of fleecy clouds tossed carelessly into the vast background of emptiness, looking so white and distinct that it seems, would you but lift up a hand, you could bury it in their snowy depths. The pure stretch of level snow, field after field dotted here and there with clumps of dark green pines, the softly-rounded hills rising gradually under their dazzling covering, and over all the blazing midday sun lighting and warming the silent beauty of the land; these make such a picture as once to behold is to remember for ever.

There is a calm and repose more utter than floats over the orange groves and blue lakes and shimmering, soundless bays of the 'land of song,' and one draws a long breath, drinking in a bounding life and vigour with the frosty air, that sends the quick, warm blood coursing through one's veins tumultuously. There are dark specks flitting over the snow and wheeling round in the clear air; and, as they draw near, they prove to be a flock of snow-birds, dainty and fragile, like wee ghosts of the noisy chattering that filled the air with sounds of life and the music of their tiny poet-souls (no, they haven't souls; but it almost seems as if they had, sometimes) scarce two months ago. It seems impossible to believe that so short a time past we had balmy zephyrs and rippling streams, and that those naked spectres of

maple trees were glowing in such regal splendour of green and gold and crimson and delicate pink as you know not of in the 'right little, tight little island.' But the long, drowsy, dying days of Indian summer, when the sun hung in the heavens like a ball of fire, have glided by silent and shadowy, and the gorgeous livery of the maple groves has faded brown, and the leaves have dropped silently one by one, and the busy birdies have twittered a lingering farewell, and left the solemn beauty of the autumn days, to seek more genial winter quarters, and the shrinking, hesitating, reluctant virgin turns to her frosty bridegroom with sighing winds and tearful showers and dull gloom over all her one-time beauty. Gradually he took her to his freezing arms, and touched her rivers; and they stood still, twined like bands of silver for her decoration; and her trees—they held out their bare arms in mute appeal to the balmy winds and warm rains to release and reclothe them; and then he covered her over, from her vine-wreathed head to her shivering feet, with a pure white mantle, and decked her with icy diamonds and delicate and wondrous filagree of hoar-frost for a crown; and now, as she stands in her calm, cold, unsullied loveliness, is she not beautiful beyond description, exalted beyond praise? It is impossible to stay indoors on such a day as this. There are snow-shoes standing in the corner, and skates hanging in the hall; and there is a merry, resistless jingling of sleigh bells, and a vision of waving robes and dainty rugs and stamping horses before the window; and down go pen and paper, and



SLEIGHING IN CANADA.

Drawn by C. O. Murray.]



hurrah for the snow, the sunshine, and a sleigh ride!

We must put on the warmly-lined moccasins, gaily worked with beads and velvet by the squaws, who come round to sell their flashy handiwork from door to door. 'Goot moccasin; skin of deer, no sheep! squaw make him; red bead, shiny! Papoose no eat all day; some bread for old squaw at home. Seigner drunk down town. Buy moccasin; good walk in snow! How much him come?' And three dirty fingers are held up for answer. 'Him ver' cheap; papoose got not'ing to eat all day!' And the dirty child's staring eyes, as it peers from its blanket on its mother's back, *do* look starved and eager; and the mother's broken English is very plaintive and patient in its unconnected story of meek submission and harsh oppression. There is something very touching in the bent head and heavily-laden figure; something that goes right home to our woman-hearts in the gentle gaze of those liquid, fathomless, sad, brown eyes, so that we take the poor, tawdry-looking moccasins, and sigh as the thin fingers close over the three crisp dollar bills; and this brings us back to the time we lined them cosily with soft flannel, and put them on for the first time.

Charlie hardly had strength and patience to await the tedious process of wrapping and pinning and prinking, which are the necessary prelude to an afternoon's dissipation, especially if it is to be concluded by a high tea with Mrs. Grimsby; but at last patience had its reward, and the hot bricks and warm shawls and soft-knitted 'clouds,' with the dancing, beating heart inside, and over them was safely tucked under the last buffalo robe, the whip cracks, the silvery bells jingle their merry

music, and we are off for a real Canadian sleigh ride.

There is something so exhilarating in the swift, gliding motion that, with every jingle of the bells, one feels a mad desire to prance about and sing or shout into the cold, clear, colourless air; but such a proceeding would be both difficult and dangerous with a pair of high-bred horses going at ever so many miles an hour, and in a tiny shell-shaped sleigh or 'cutter,' as we call it, of about three feet in width.

All these winter exercises—skating, snow-shoeing, and sleighbing—make one's pulse bound and one's heart beat too fast for quietude; but in the skating and snow-shoeing the muscular exertion keeps the spirits within bounds, and the tongue silent—or, at least, does not make it noisier than usual—while sitting still in a sleigh becomes almost an impossibility; and we feel we must give vent to this excess of enthusiasm in some way, so we sing. There is a great, low, shallow box on runners, commonly dubbed a 'wood sleigh,' and in which a dozen merry-makers can be cosily packed with cushions and buffalo robes, that is often in use for rollicking excursions to ample farmhouses, where 'tea and turn out' is the programme of the evening. There are one or two of these vehicles in sight now, far off on the gleaming, beaten road; and across the country comes a faint echo of sleigh bells, and merry voices chanting the old Canadian 'boat song,' with which we join with a will, laughing a jovial good-day as our lighter vehicle whirls past them, and catching their ringing 'Row, brothers, row!' softer and softer as the distance grows between us.

Here we are whisking up the long pine-lined avenue and across the

level lawn, and unrolling ourselves, like great animated mummies, in the blaze and glare of a mammoth fire of pine logs, and toasting our moccasined feet in the grateful glow, while we munch golden russets, and crack hickory nuts with 'flat-irons.'

Through the wide windows we see the shadows lengthening, and the sun sinking to rest behind the snow-covered hills; and through the open door comes an agreeable odour of goodies preparing for tea.

Charlie wonders why people can't go sleigh-riding every day, and kind Mrs. Grimsby straightway invites a daily repetition of the visit until the sleighing is over, which he as gravely accepts. I must give you a peep at the charming tea-table in the middle of the pine-floored kitchen, a sniff of the delicate odours that tempt our hungry mouths, and I wish I could give you a taste of the dainties as well. Who shall tell of the peculiarly delicious compounds, known to the taste of man as 'tea-cakes,' which you, dear, clever Englishwomen don't in the least know how to make, stir ye never so wisely? Mrs. Grimsby knows, though; and she places the snowy pile on the oval table with a satisfied smile, that seems to say, 'There, ma'am, beat *that* if you can.' She does make the most charming teas; indeed, it is a perfection of the Canadian good-wife. They set their wits to work to devise new and enticing compositions, which all go under the one name, 'tea-cakes;' they set out their home-spun linen white and fine, and their home-made bread sweet and light; their newly-churned golden butter, their fresh fruity preserves and jellies, and clear virgin honey, and—oh, ye gods and diminutive fishes!—their much-to-be-admired tea-cakes, with a delightful com-

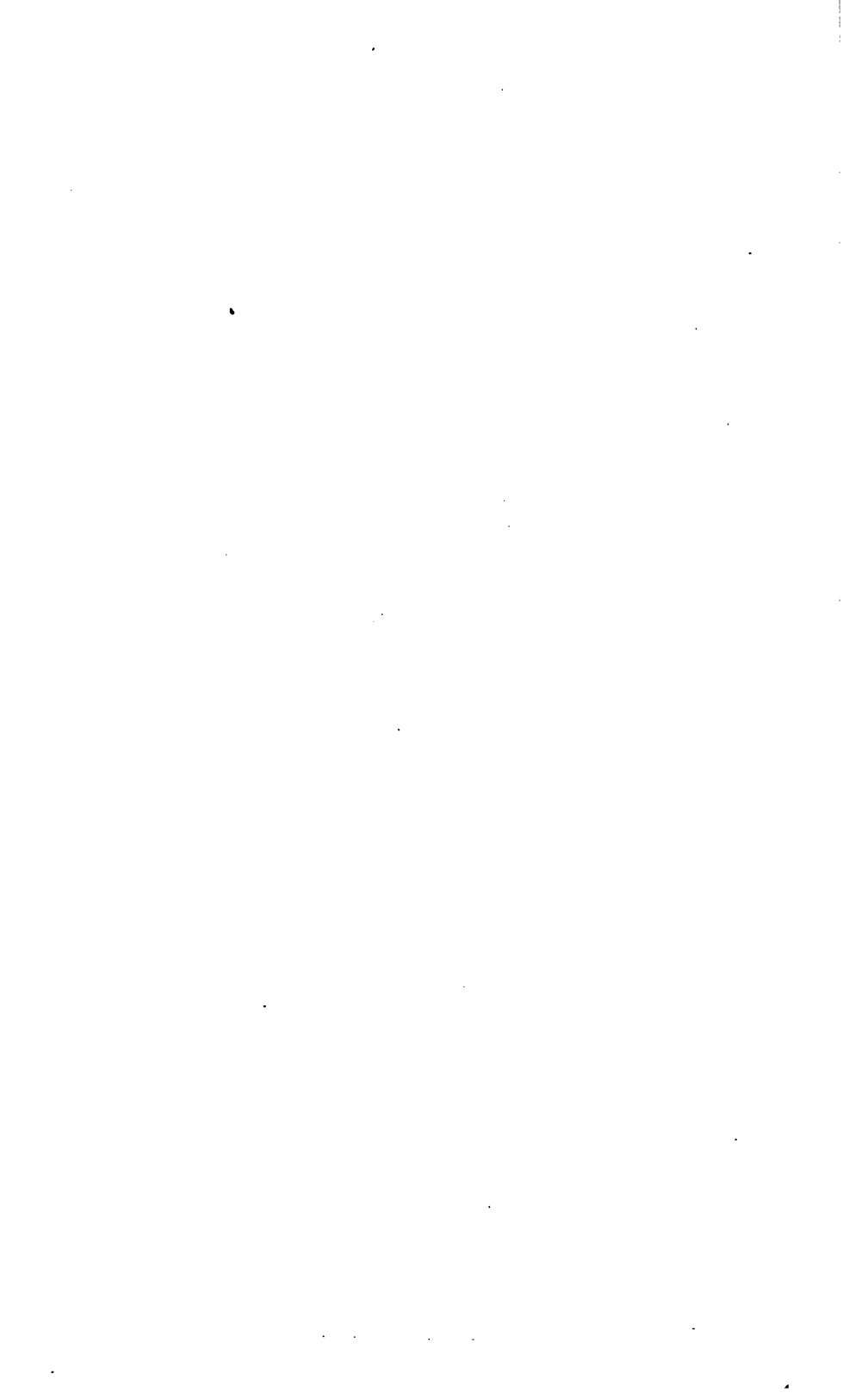
placency that is charming to behold; while they serve you generously, and parry praise and compliments with an ingenuity that is infinitely edifying and amusing.

Dear me! it is time to wrap up again, and be off in the still, clear moonlight, with cheerful good-nights from the hale old pioneer and his blooming helpmeet, and many entreaties to 'come soon again; you're always welcome.'

Home, through the gleaming white snow, over which the glancing steel runners glide noiselessly—home, past the gloomy pine groves and the bare maples, whose gaunt limbs are sheathed in a coating of shining ice, and hung with icicles like reversed tapers on a Christmas-tree—home, with the gay bells ringing fainter and fainter in my sleepy ears, while the frost nips my nose vengefully—home—and I wake with a start at Charlie's loud 'Whoa!' and see lights streaming out on the drive from the French windows, fighting the pale, wan moonlight with a ruddy glow, and blending with it out on the ghostly shrubs and leafless trees across the snow-covered croquet ground.

I know I am all one broad smile of delight as we stand for a moment on the steps, and look out on the fairy-like scene, for Charlie laughs and says, 'Happy, Mary?' And it seems as if a whole year of delight has been crowded into those six hours. It is with sparkling eyes and a great sigh that I turn to answer, 'I never saw anything so lovely in my life!' And there are tears of overpowering happiness in those same eyes, as his hand-clasp answers to the cry of my heart. Dear London Society, high and low, I would you had many memories as bright as the lights that bring back to me that 'Sleigh ride in Canada.'

MARY.





Drawn by E. Buckman.]

THE MILKWOMAN.

THE MILKWOMAN.

BY JAMES GREENWOOD, 'THE AMATEUR CASUAL.'

ONCE upon a time, the maiden who milked the cow with the crumpled horn, and who, after that healthful and invigorating occupation, poised her snow-white pail on her head, and tripped it over the dewy grass, while the soaring lark was not yet far advanced with his morning hymn—the British milkmaid, by universal acclamation, was allowed to be the very image and reflection of simplicity and innocence. Hogarth so pictured her; so she appeared in almost every romance written prior to the present generation; so she was depicted on the stage, where thrilling domestic drama was enacted. There were other maids who figured in domestic drama—flower-girls, watercress-girls, millers' maids, and chamber-maids—but in one and all of these there was developed an amount of archness and worldly wisdom that in some degree prepared the audience for the possibility of her yielding to the dazzling temptations, and wiles and fair-sounding persuasions by which the fascinating villain with the cloak and glossy whiskers imposed on her. To be sure, the audience expressed no disapprobation when her virtuous young lover, in response to her ringing shrieks for help, appeared most opportunely at the garret-window, and shot the libertine through the heart; but, could they have brought him to life again, and tried him in cool blood, the probabilities are that they would have found him guilty with extenuating circumstances. But when a little milkmaid was made the victim—when some pink-and-white pretty creature, in spotless muslin and patent-leather high-

heeled shoes, with rosettes that contrasted bewitchingly with the dainty stockings—was in danger of becoming the prey of the ruthless monster in the cloak, then the fury of pit and gallery knew no bounds, and the actor's perfect delineation of the villain's part could scarcely save him from a storm of indignant hisses.

But the typical milkmaid is defunct—dead and buried as undoubtedly as that model mother of the race, the Dairyman's Daughter, whose unpretentious tomb is an unfailing attraction for stage-coach tourists in the Isle of Wight, who stay for refreshment at the White Lion at Arreton. 'As innocent as a milkmaid,' indeed! It might go down very well as a joke in a burlesque; but such a comparison, made in sober earnest, would now be received pretty much as if one spoke of an honest horse-dealer, or an immaculate trader in marine stores. The milkmaid depicted on the accompanying page, making allowance for her weatherproof habiliments, is by no means a wicked or designing-looking person. But *we* know. Our good friend the 'Milk Journal' has 'interviewed' her in his laboratory, and she has come out anything but guiltless. Her frank and open countenance, the fearless manner in which she has raised the lid of her pail sheer under the nose of the gossip-loving maid-of-all-work, should bespeak her honest; but the odds are fearfully against the rash assumption. She may not be responsible for the counterfeit; but she knows quite well that the contents of her pails is not milk. She is in the secret; but it does not follow that she has a diabolical relish for it. Nay, we

are willing, for our artist's sake, to take her on trust, and believe that it is not her will, but her poverty consents that she shall be an agent in the purveying of spurious milk. Then it becomes interesting to know what she and the maid-of-all-work are in such earnest discussion about. Can it be concerning the 'young man' of the latter? Bread and milk are intimately associated—perhaps the milkwoman brings her news of the baker. No; for in that case there would be a twinkle in the milkwoman's eye, and she would not stand, as she does, with a space between her and the gate. She would be closer to the area, leaning against the railings, and bending her head to whisper the stealthy message. Nor would the maid, whose work is always, look so sedate and grave. She would not carry her hands folded under her apron. Cold! She would not feel in the least degree cold if the talk was of *him*. No; the conversation is of something more grave than sweethearting. Perhaps there is sickness in the house. It is not impossible that the maid's chilliness may, in part, be accounted for by her having recently emerged from the warm chamber in which the little patient is lying so weak and ill—some small child, maybe, brought by fever so low that it can scarcely eat at all, while its very existence depends entirely on its taking nourishment. 'The only thing it can swallow, poor little thing,' says the sympathetic maid, 'is a little milk and arrowroot, and the doctor says that unless she has this very frequently, she can do no other than sink and die.' This must be bad for the matronly milk-carrier, who, perhaps, has babies of her own. She knows all about the stuff in the cans, and her mental reflection must be that it will go hard with the poor little

invalid if its convalescence depends on the nourishing properties it contains. She thinks of the water in which the original dairy produce was drowned, and of the 'mysterious colouring' that was afterwards added to give its pale corse something of the hue of vitality and health, and she feels like an evil conspirator. Perhaps to-morrow she may find the white blinds drawn close at that house, and the maid-of-all-work with red eyes and tearful; then will that conscience-stricken milkwoman turn away, feeling bitterly the pressure on her shoulders of her yoke of servitude, while her pails hang a dead weight on her hands. Stern necessity compels her to complete her round, and her cry resounds in the crisp frosty air, 'Mee-oh! Mee-oh!' but it has lost its mellowness. There are very few who notice the difference, and those, probably, attribute it to a sore throat—to a cold in the milkwoman's head, perhaps—but we, who are in the secret, know that it is the milkwoman's heart, and not her throat, that is sore, and that, were she not able to find expression for her remorse in that doleful wail of 'Me-oh!' she might be driven to further acts of adulteration by weeping into her milk-cans.

Now, had she been a carrier in the service of the Seal and Soft-sawder Dairy Company, it would have been impossible for her to commit herself in the way above mentioned. The Seal and Soft-sawder Company, shrewdly alert in the interests of their customers, and with full knowledge of the danger of leading milk-carriers, maid or male, into temptation, adopt the wise precaution of securing the lids of the pails their servants carry out by means of sealing-wax, making it imperative on them to serve the customer from a tap inserted at the vessel's

base. This is an excellent idea. Folks believe in seals, and they have a right to do so; and when a milkman affixes his, and publicly proclaims it, it is as though he cried out, 'Behold my pledge and guarantee! By this red wax and the symbol impressed on it I declare that within this vessel is purity alone. The milk from my establishment has not been, and cannot possibly be tampered with; it is real and unadulterated.' Nothing, seemingly, could be more straightforward than this; but alas! analysis has shown that, in many cases, the sealed lid 'dodge' is but an elaboration of deception. Somehow (the upright dairyman shrugs his shoulders, and points significantly to his rascally carrier) water, and worse, does find its way into these sealed receptacles, and consumers are cheated, after all. The milk-merchant cannot account for it, of course. He informs you blandly that he has been at a great expense in providing these new pails to obviate the evil you complain of, and that the failure of his system (if, as you aver, it is a failure) is quite a mystery to him. Perhaps, however, if the tongues, as well as the pails, of the carriers were not sealed, the seeming mystery might be speedily, if not satisfactorily, elucidated; and that being done, nothing would remain but to perfect a system proved to be faulty. We have learned dogs, and learned pigs; that cows are not incapable of extraordinary feats is proved by the one that jumped over the moon. Let us educate our cows; let us teach them to milk themselves in the strict privacy of their habitations, a sturdy short-horn keeping sentry at the cow-house door to prevent any dishonest creature on two legs from entering; let the sagacious animals be further provided with a little fire and

some sealing-wax, with which the lids of the full pails may be secured and stamped with a hoof, no other brand being genuine. There may be a few obstacles in the way of successfully carrying out this idea; but, as it is very unlikely that we shall ever get pure milk until we do, it should be an incentive to patient trial.

Until that excellent newspaper, the 'Milk Journal,' came into existence, nearly two years since, although a certain amount of uneasiness prevailed amongst us as to the quality of the fluid that was supplied us under the name of milk, little that was reliable was known on the subject. Now, however, thanks to the invaluable researches of the journal in question, our eyes are completely opened to the extent to which we have been the victims of the milkman. The only consolation to be derived from the careful analysis of hundreds of milk samples—obtained from vendors in all parts of London, and always without their knowing the purpose for which the said samples were obtained—is this: in his rapacity for profit the milkman stops short of poisoning us. 'The result of our examinations,' says the experienced chemist to whom this department of the Milk Journal's wholesome work is entrusted, 'is quite decisive against the occurrence of any kind of mineral adulteration. Not one of sixty samples was adulterated in the smallest degree with salt, or chalk, or mineral matter of any description;' but, on the other hand, the extent to which the frauds of putting off skimmed milk for pure, and of adding water to the article, is almost incredible. We are told that genuine milk should yield ten per cent. of its bulk in the shape of cream, and twelve per cent.—a little more or less—of solid matter, when the

milk is dried at 212° Fah. The very first investigations of the analyst, however, led to some curious discoveries. With a few honourable exceptions (duly recorded and perpetuated in the pages of the journal), it was found that a system of roguery prevailed throughout the trade, affecting the Milk Company no less than the humble back-street milk-shop keeper. It was proved that an association in a large way of business, holding a contract to supply genuine milk for the use of the paupers of Holborn Union, improved their bargain by robbing the milk of seven-tenths of its cream, and adding water at the rate of nearly a quart to the gallon. But the company supplying the Shoreditch paupers cut it finer even than this. An analysis of this precious mixture disclosed the fact that it was diluted to an extent that made it inferior to 'half-and-half.' That is to say, if these robbers of a pauper child's bread-and-milk basin had been content with adding a gallon of water to a gallon of milk, the result of analysis would have shown cream 5 per cent., solids 6 per cent.; whereas the figures appear, cream 4 per cent., solids 5·48 per cent. It has been ascertained that the metropolitan workhouses and unions pay annually the sum of 15,000*l.* for milk; therefore, taking the stuff supplied to Holborn Union as a fair average sample, metropolitan rate-payers have to pay 5000*l.* a year for water supplied by enterprising contractors, at the rate of about threepence a quart. It may be some satisfaction to paupers, however, to be informed that it is not only of folk of their mean estate that the milk-purveyor takes advantage. The Black List published in the 'Milk Journal' contains the names of those whose 'walk' is restricted to the aristocratic regions of May-

fair and Belgravia. Even Royalty itself is not exempt from the machinations of the dishonest dairyman. A purveyor to the Queen figures in the shameful list, and the result of two analyses shows that the royal milk-jug was 'Simpsonized' one day to the extent of 15 per cent; and a few days after, to the extent of 12 per cent.

There are neighbourhoods — whole districts, of miles in extent — where genuine milk is an article not to be obtained. According to the 'Milk Journal,' the parish of Islington may claim this distinction. In one month it obtained from fifty milksellers, great and small, samples of the article in question, and in *not one* instance was it possible to return a favourable report. Some of the fifty were less roguish than others; but all were rogues. Much of the stuff that was tested contained no cream at all; other yielded four, three, two, *one* per cent., instead of ten, while as regards the quantity of water added, it is curious, on glancing down the long list, to note each vendor's strict adherence to his dishonest system. In every case two samples were procured from each shop, the one a week or ten days after the other; but the difference exhibited is, in most cases, very slight. Twenty per cent. of water seems to be the average amount of adulteration, varying scarcely the turn of a pump-handle in a painful.

Appropos of the eccentricities of the milk trade in the parish of Islington may be related a fact not generally known. Twice a week, on Mondays and Thursdays, which are market-days, there may be seen in the streets in the vicinity of the Metropolitan Cattle Market, in Caledonian Road, vendors of milk, who differ in appearance very remarkably from the orthodox milk-man and woman.

The Islington market-day milkman is a person who is not very suggestive either of sweet breath of cows or the delights of the tea-table. On the contrary, his voice, his manner, his attire, are more significant of the urging on of savage dogs to bite and worry the hocks and haunches of distracted bullocks, and of the aiding their efforts of torture, by means of a stout ash-stick tipped with a steel prod. Nor is it at all wonderful that it should be so, since, by profession, the man is what his battered hat, his mud-bespattered boots and leggings, his ochrestained fustian coat bespeak him—a drover. It is only on Mondays and Thursdays that he appears in the comparatively mild and pacific character of a milkman. He does not, however, conform to the rules and usages of the craft. He is burthened with no 'yoke,' and he eschews the bright and decent can. In place of the last mentioned he carries a commonplace wooden pail, borrowed, probably, from the waterman at the nearest cab-stand, and for a measure he has a public-house pewter pint pot. He affects no musical cry. What he has to sell he advertises with the voice of a costermonger, setting down his pail in the mud, the more conveniently to make a speaking-trumpet of his hands, to assist his roaring. 'Hoy, hoy!' he bellows, 'here yer har! Fresh drawn, fresh drawn, and on'y tuppence a quart. Come and 'ave it gin-u-wine!' That it is milk from the cow there can be no doubt, for, as well as 'fresh drawn,' it is unstrained, and the liquid in the pail bears on its surface numerous specimens of the hair of the quadruped that yielded it. It is fresh enough, this milk, and probably, since it cost the vendor nothing, it may be unadulterated. Why,

then, is it so cheap? Why is it sold at the rate of twopence a quart, when the regular dealer in the article is demanding, and obtaining, fourpence or fivepence for the same quantity? In the first place, good reader, and as above hinted, these drovers-turned-milkmen are not called on to buy what they sell. It is their 'perquisite.' It should be understood that of the four or five thousand beasts exhibited in the market for sale, a very considerable number are cows 'in milk.' Now a cow so conditioned, if over-driven and worried, is apt to grow restless and feverish, and to suffer in appearance consequently.

The butcher coming to the market to buy may wish to 'kill' that same night; and he is far too knowing a man of business to attempt to convert into beef an animal whose blood is unhealthily excited. These are the creatures on which the drovers are permitted to operate; pushing amongst the poor beasts huddled in their pens, pail in hand, and with a keen eye for a laden udder, and milking a little here and a little there until their vessel is full.

The obtaining of genuine milk by the ordinary means of pressure is all the more hopeless, because those who deal in it seem utterly lost to all sense of shame as regards its adulteration. We are commonly informed that, for an extra penny a quart, we may 'send, or come and see our milk drawn from the cow.' This can only mean one thing, and that is, *not* that Mr. Cowkeeper regards a visit to his cow-house during milking-time worth a penny as an instructive and interesting exhibition, but that he wishes to be secured against the penny loss he shall sustain if you prevent him, by your presence at the time of purchase, from withdrawing from

your quart of milk to the extent of twenty-five per cent., and substituting water.

The most mysterious part of the business is to understand what becomes of all the milk yielded by the cows of Great Britain. There was a time when a great deal of it was converted into butter; but, if we may believe all that we hear and read, modern invention has caused the use of milk to be almost entirely superseded in the production of that article of domestic consumption; the chief ingredient used in the manufacture of the composition provided for spreading on bread being imported from Russia and Australia, in enormous hogsheads, exactly like those one occasionally sees at the door of the tallow-chandler, with hog-lard, and salt, and certain flavourings and coloured matter, of a secret nature, and doubtless as valuable to the manufacturer as are certain mysterious dyes to the makers of cotton and woollen goods. In the good old times, again, milk was not uncommonly used to make cheese; but, judging from the enormous difficulty experienced by the house-keeper in procuring a single pound of either Cheshire, Cheddar, or Gloucester, single or double, that is fit to be eaten, it would seem like a libel on cow creation to attempt to account for the dearth of milk in this direction. Every London milk-purveyor, of whom you may ask the question, is ready with his answer. It is rinderpest that causes the scarcity: it is foot and mouth disease: it is the failure of last year's root crops, and the pernicious use of oilcake as cattle food! But I think that the most ingenious theory was that propounded by our own milkman.

We never suspected him, the villain! For years has he replenished our milk-jug. He keeps cows of his own, and has a meadow

at the rear of his premises in which, when off duty, the horned creatures disport. It would be impossible to imagine a more genuine-looking milkman: ruddy-faced, farmerish—even to farmyard boots and a sage-green smock frock—it seemed as though, even if he tried to 'doctor' his milk, he would, in his innocence of the ways of roguery, make such a hash of it that he would never attempt the trick again. It was more with a view to strengthen our high opinion of Mr. Brooks' character—if that were possible—than from any suspicion we entertained of his integrity, that we procured a lactometer and, one fine morning, plunged it into a measure of Brooks' milk, so 'new,' as to be positively warm. Judge, then, of our amazement when, without the least hesitation, the faithful instrument pronounced Brooks a cheat! It seemed impossible. The lactometer we had known but a few hours: Brooks we had known for years. The former must be in error. To be quite sure, we carried it to our friend the chemist. No. The lactometer was correct!

When Brooks called that afternoon, to his astonishment he was asked to cross the threshold and walk into the parlour. From his manner of passing the cuff of his innocent sage-green frock across his lips, as he reverently rubbed holes in our door-mat with his nobnailed boots, my impression is, that Mr. Brooks entertained the pleasing idea that he was about to be invited to partake of a liquid that was somewhat more exhilarating than milk. When, however, he caught sight of the lactometer, his countenance changed instantly. He did not wait to be accused. The milk was 'dashed' a little—he admitted it. 'But it wasn't done out of dishonesty,' protested Brooks the bold:

'no man as knows me can accuse me of *that*. The fact is, sir, there isn't enough milk to be had, and we are *bliged* to eke it out, and make it go as far as possible.'

'But how do you account for the scarcity?'

'Well now,' returned our milkman, 'that's a puzzler to a good many, but *I've* worked it out as clear as——'

Seeing that Brooks was at the moment at a loss for a simile, I was about to suggest, 'as clear as fraud detected by a lactometer;' but, possibly suspecting my design, he hastened to complete his halting sentence—'as clear as crist-sh'll I can make it out. It isn't the poperlation growing in advance of the cows, 'cos natur' is natur', and the poperlation couldn't do it, if it tried. It isn't rinderpest, and it isn't foot and mouth disease. Likewise it isn't shortness of green crops for food; it's the hincrase of factories.'

And as Brooks disclosed the mysterious secret he lowered his voice to a whisper, and, I thought, cast a defiant glance at the lactometer, still floating in the milk—the inexorable instrument that had dealt so hardly with him, as though to challenge it to disprove the genuineness of his opinion.

'The increase of factories?' I repeated, not a little amazed at his communication. 'I should have supposed that an increase of factories would have ensured an augmented supply, rather than——'

'But you don't quite understand me, sir. I don't mean milk factories: I mean factories where weaving and spinning is going on—cotton mills, and that sort of thing. It's the feedin' bottles of Lancashire, and Manchester, and Nottingham that is draining the

country of its cows' milk,' continued Brooks, evidently desiring to show himself obliging and affable, if not strictly honest. 'It stands to sense, sir, if you come to think of it. I've got a friend who is a foreman at one of the largest babies'-feedin'-bottle dealer's in England, and he tells me that hundreds of crates of these goods goes every year to Lancashire alone; and why is it? Because there the women work as well as the men; and, what is more, they go out to work. That's the thing. They go out to work, hundreds and thousands of these mothers of families, and, as a matter o' course, they can't take their babies with 'em. They leave 'em at home, poor little creators, to console themselves with the feedin'-bottle. That's how the milk goes. It stands to reason. Poor people don't go in much for milk—a hap'orth is as much as they'll take for the whole family's tea; but you can't keep a baby's feedin'-bottle going from morning till night under a couple of pen'orth. That's how the milk goes, sir, and that accounts for its being so scarce. And that's what it'll be here,' continued Mr. Brooks, prophetically, 'if we don't keep a sharp look out. It's all very well, this agitation about women's rights, and their wanting to know why they can't follow this trade and that, as men do; but it will be a bad day for those that advocate cheap milk, if ever they get their way. Mothers out at work means babies at home, and falling back on the feedin'-bottle. And up milk will go, in proportion to the demand, until a cow that yields bountiful, will be as valuable almost as a goose that lays golden eggs.'





UNFINISHED PICTURES.

BY JOSEPH HATTON.

A COACH suddenly pulled up on a country highway; the horses prancing; the driver and his passengers looking after a fox which has recently crossed the road. Two dogs, the first of a pack in full cry, are tearing away, their noses close to the scent, their bodies almost under the coach. In the distance come the huntmen, making a picturesque group in the autumn landscape. It is a Leeds coach. The driver has an eye to sport. He will not run the risk of spoiling the scent. His shiny-coated cattle rear and plunge at their sudden pull up. They are on a bridge spanning an old water-course, which gives the artist an opportunity of introducing accessories that help the general effect. It is altogether a rare piece of work, full of 'go,' admirable in composition, the horses living, breathing animals, the coach-passengers genuine travellers, the scene English in the broadest sense of the word.

The picture is Ben Herring's. It is unfinished. The horses are not completely harnessed. The driver has no reins. The dogs on the road, like some of Landseer's, are mere outlines. It was the artist's last picture. His hand faltered and fell while he was engaged upon the concluding touches. He died in presence of his own bright autumnal creation. I sat in his little studio a few days ago, and contemplated his work. An infant, born five days before his sudden death, sat crooning and crowing at the painted horses. The autumn wind came moaning through the forest, the forest in which Herring often wandered smoking, thinking,

and catching butterflies. His cottage and studio stand on the borders of Epping Forest not far from Chingford. I looked in, with sympathetic curiosity, to see the artist's work-room.

As a rule there is nothing half so cosy as artists' studios, though their style and fashion are as varied as the works of their owners. A few odd examples may be mentioned. Millais' studio is fitted up with artistic taste and elegance. Few painters are so comfortably provided. To my thinking, a studio should be elegantly and artistically furnished. Millais' soft carpet, his classic vases, the flowing drapery, his pretty little piano, his soft lights, the well balanced colour of his furniture, and his flowers lying carelessly here and there, are apropos in the highest degree. Mr. O'Neil has a severer taste; but the silence of distant fields and forests seems almost to reign in the admirably-constructed work-room in which 'Eastward Ho!' and 'Home Again' grew and astonished the artist's friends. It is easy to understand how the big, dull side of that famous ship would startle the first beholders who had access to O'Neil's studio. They thought their friend mad to fill his foreground with such an ugly mass; but they were silenced when the real homely Englishmen and women began to come down the side, saying farewell to the gallant fellows who presently crowded the deck and looked over the bulwarks at the sorrow-stricken dear ones for whom the old boatman was waiting below. A contrast to both these studios is that of Ben Leader, who has made

his way to the front as a landscape artist. It is surrounded by the country which Leader loves to paint; the middle distance is fine, rich, open meadow land; in the far distance the Malvern hills mount up to the sky in a graceful outline that rivals the sun's own pictures of cloud mountains. Leader's studio is as simple as the most ordinary workshop. There is nothing in it to distract the artist's attention from his work or to relieve the eye when it is weary; but the worker has all kinds of shutters and mechanical contrivances for the management of his lights; and he paints with great facility, working with unflagging earnestness while he is at it. If he wants a change, there is his horse at the door, and a glorious country to ride through, with the old city of Worcester lying down yonder in the valley by the Severn. The finest studio I ever visited—it would hold all those I have mentioned—is Doré's, in Paris. It was planned long before the artist became famous. When there was some doubt about his pictures being hung at the French Academy, he said to his friend Jerrold, 'I will have my own salon; if they wish to see my pictures, they must come there.' Brave words; in them spoke out the conscious soul, the firm will, the true genius. It was akin to Disraeli's prophetic speech, 'The time will come,' &c.

But I am wandering far away from that simple little studio in the cottage garden by the forest, with its unfinished pictures, and its strange, sad silence. Ben Herring was a simple-minded, gentle, homely man, with few wants and almost childish pleasures. His studio, a square wooden building, contained not only his works, but his chief amusements. With an infinite amount of labour and ingenuity he constructed round three

parts of the room, on a thick shelving, breast high, a railway. He had a panorama of open country, fields, woods, towns, villages, bridges, at the back of it. Engines, carriages, points, model station-houses, all were his own manufacture. He had ordinary passenger trains, luggage trains, mail trains. They made regular journeys; they were timed; they were shunted; they were subject to points; they came and went with due regularity. The artist worked them by a sort of spindle and cord; and during the intervals of work it was his delight to sit and smoke and watch the trains. His little ones climbed his knees and went into ecstasies at the sight; and his neighbours often came in to share in their amusement. At one point of the line he constructed a tin bridge, almost for the sake of the rattle of the trains. He had a heavy truck laden with an iron screw-nut, and now and then, after an operation of shunting, he would leave it on the line where the mail train would shortly pass. Presently the fast train would come rattling along over the metal bridge, and then rush pell-mell into the luggage truck, causing a terrible accident, at which Herring and his friends would laugh heartily, as they picked up the wooden passengers, readjusted the train, and cleared the track for coming traffic. It is not a little curious that an artist who loved horses, and painted them as if he loved them, should have found so much delight in a toy railway. The pleasures and amusements of men of genius would make an interesting book. I commend the subject to some apt and thoughtful compiler. The name of Ben Herring is worthy of being classed with men of genius; had he lived he would have made a far higher name than that of his father. But as to his amusements,

there lies in his studio another reminiscence of them, in a little cabinet of insects and butterflies. He knew almost every kind of moth in the forest.

'Bridle moth and Golden Spot,
Bramble moth, Buff Tip, and Dot,
Mottled, Willow, Peach and Pearl,
With dusty stripe and crimson curl,
Silk and satin, brown and red,
Burnished brass and Devil's-head.'

He knew them every one, and wandered after them everywhere. As a collector he was humane and gentle; he killed his specimens with chloroform on the instant of capture. In the centre of his studio he had a small billiard-table, the *fac-simile* almost of one that stands in Leader's work-room. Now and then he would play a game with an imaginary opponent, who sometimes ran him very hard and occasionally beat him.

Ben Herring's studio remains almost as he left it. The trains; the moths; the billiard-table; the paragraph about his father drawing the three heads on the back of a cheque at the Bank of England stuck on the wall; two or three unfinished pictures here and there; an exquisite little finished painting of a stag's head—a memorial of the last stag killed in the forest; a fishing rod; a few old pipes; some 'Gentleman's Magazines;' a modelled head or two of horses; the familiar easel, the palette, a few tubes of colour. One of the unfinished pictures is 'Going to the Horse Fair.' The original of this was painted on commission for a print publisher, who gave him 500*l.* for it. The one now on the wall was being painted for the engraver. But the printseller failed; and, somehow or another, a mistake was made by an auctioneer, and the original was bought by an American for a nominal sum, and taken to the States.

Another unfinished picture worth mentioning is 'The Retired Actress.' It is an interior of a country stable, in which stands a white mare, once a favourite of the circus, with a foal reclining at her feet. A couple of pigeons are perched on a tub, and some poultry are picking up a living among the straw. The top half of the stable-door is open, showing a pleasant bit of landscape. His latest finished picture has been sent to the Manchester Exhibition. It is called 'Green Sleeves leads,' and is a breezy bit of steeple-chasing. Everybody who takes an interest in our national sports, knows this artist's famous pair of pictures, 'Silks and Satins of the Turf,' and 'Silks and Satins of the Field.' The publisher of these cleared 4000*l.* by his purchase. The coloured copies are now among the most favourite of sporting prints. Herring used to receive a guinea each for signing the artist's proofs, and he made a considerable sum of money in this way.

Among the sketches in the dead artist's studio is one by Charles Herring; it is a harvest scene, roughed out on a sheet of brown paper, and shows the touch of a master hand. Charles Herring died young, and unknown. He assisted his father in the palmy days of that famous author of 'The Frugal Meal' J. F. Herring, the father of Ben and Charles, was a self-made man. He was a native of Doncaster. As a boy he was fond of painting; but he did not commence real art work until late in life. His rise was almost the result of accident. One day, sitting next the driver of a coach whose horses were giving him very serious trouble, Herring got permission from the whip to take the reins; whereupon he at once proved himself to be quite an accomplished coachman; and this led to his

taking an engagement in that capacity. While tooling his coach one day, he pointed out to a passenger some of the beauties of the country, in such artistically technical language that the passenger discovered his predilection for painting. The passenger proved to be not only a lover of art, but—what was more to the purpose just then—a man of money, and he gave Herring the means of prosecuting his studies. The result is well known. He painted nearly all her Majesty's favourite horses; he left behind him works that will live for ages; for years he filled the position of a country gentleman, living among his hunters and his dogs at Tunbridge Wells. He married a second time, late in life, and his widow is still living. There is only one son now living, the two who especially inherited his genius being Charles and Ben. The former died at the age of thirty, the latter at forty. These sons worked hard in company with their father, and on some of his best pictures; Charles at an early age giving the very highest promise of

future power. It is a rare thing to see children inheriting a father's genius. The Herrings are, however, remarkable examples of transmitted genius. Ben Herring had no equal in those days as a painter of the horse, whose anatomy was to him an open book, every line of which he knew by heart. A sister of poor Ben's is married to Harrison Weir, who, in another walk of animal painting, has made a lasting name in art.

Ben Herring died a few years too early both for fame and fortune. If there is anything in infantile manifestations of genius, his youngest child will some day be heard of in the art-world. I left it still crooning and crowing at that unfinished picture of the coach and horses; and, passing through the garden, my eyes rested upon a pinky clump of rose leaves which had fallen before the first frost of the autumn.

'Leaves have their time to fall,
And flowers to wither at the North wind's
breath,

And stars to set;—but all,
Thou hast all seasons for thine own, O
Death!



THE ROMANCE OF MEDICINE.

IN once more gathering up the threads of this subject from other years, and endeavouring to address a lay audience from a laic point of view, one would naturally desire, according to the limited measure of one's ability, to grasp some medical subject for which we all have an affinity, and which may be of usefulness to some. But in these papers I enter into an implied bargain with my readers to tell them something picturesque and odd—something that may even be romantic and sensational: but I am also troubled with the uneasy idea that I might ventilate some matters that might be for the health and happiness of some of us. I am like some honest citizen who has only got some modest extent of garden-plot, which he feels bound to lay out with flowers, but at the same time he has some yearnings towards homely but esculent vegetables; or, to vary the simile, just as mathematicians have their pure and applied mathematics, so, in discussing questions of medical life and science, one desires not only to look at the subject on its abstract and literary side, but to aim at some concrete good. I will propose, *lector benevole*, that we attempt a compromise; that whilst in random, discursive talk I am permitted, as heretofore, to cull some anecdotes, thoughts and illustrations, such as outsiders may care to gather from a particular science, I may yet dwell on matters that may be of essential home interest to us, and hope there may be a somewhat serious design and meaning underlying our *olla podrida*.

In Medicine, the first object of interest and attention is the medical man himself. An author is to me something more interesting

than anything he does in authorship; a great classic's works are only the fossil remains of a vanished world of intelligence. When patients ponder on pills and potions, I the rather wonder why they do not examine into the nature and idiosyncrasy of their medical man. They may depend upon it that, if he is worth much, he will be examining into *their* nature and idiosyncrasy. The great question for the patient to solve is, whether his doctor has got the mystic gift. He may be chuckful of science; tap him anywhere, and there will be a clear-running stream of fact and comment; but the practical question is, whether he will prove a healer to me. High science may leave a man very stupid for practice. The knowledge of things is but an adjunct to the knowledge of ends. The physician aware, in the first instance, of all the dangers his patient is liable to, should, then, from his own knowledge, select the best means of obviating them; but, though he had the whole *materia medica* by heart, he would not be nearer his mark, if he knew nothing of disease; and this is essentially the full-gotten knowledge of good and evil impressed on him through a susceptibility of his mind altogether distinct from the acquisition of natural history and chemistry. To remember well the pains and the moments of relief of all the sufferers he has witnessed is the first requisite of a physician; to couple these with their attendant circumstances and to store them up too, is a farther extension of the practical intelligence. On this foundation he ought to build a store of nature-knowledge, of book-knowledge, and of logical acumen. As a man,

prudent for himself, should remember adequately all his own pains, so a man skilfully prudent for the sick, should remember all their pains and weaknesses in the first instance; his head should be more full of misery than the box of Pandora, and his only solace should be the hope at the bottom. This is a wise set of sentences, which I have found stored up among my medical notes and reflections, and, I believe, goes pretty deep into the heart of things medical.

If a medical man shows at great advantage in your home or in his own, there is one place in which he is too often uncomfortable, and makes other people uncomfortable as well. This is the witness-box. There is hardly any great trial for murder, but doctors and counsel come into fierce collision; there is the conflict of medical testimony, and the common sense of judge and jury is frequently insulted. It would be a golden rule for a medical man never to use a scientific term if a popular term would serve his use as well. The medical man not only states facts, but obtrudes his explanations and theories about them, and does so in highly technical language. The legal mind revolts against the assumption of the medical mind, and in this way much prejudice is done to science. The lawyers are pretty unanimous in holding that a medical man is the worst possible witness. He cannot plead privilege, like the lawyer or the confessor, and his best plan is to tell his story at once in the most intelligible and straightforward way that he can. The eminent German physician, Caspar, who for many years was forensic physician to the Berlin judiciary courts, is very severe upon medical witnesses: 'How often have I heard physicians talking to the judge and jury of

"excited sensibility" "reflex movements," "coma," "idiopathic," &c., without for one minute considering that they were using words and expressions wholly unintelligible to unprofessional parties!' Caspar's work is a perfect Thesaurus of odd incidents and cases; and if read, it ought to be compared with Taylor's 'Medical Jurisprudence,' that we may compare the difference between the English and Prussian systems. The Prussian plan of having an accredited medical officer attached to a court, who in some sort of way is a minister of justice, is certainly an improvement on a scene not infrequently witnessed in English courts, where a criminal trial is turned into an arena for the conflict of scientific testimony.

If you take the volumes of Caspar, and Professor Taylor's book, and throw in a little more sparkling literature, like 'Christison on Poisons'—Christison, like the Fat Boy, will make your flesh creep—you will have the materials—a veritable huge quarry—out of which you may hammer all kinds of sensational and romantic stories. You may read up the Murderers, just as old Boffin read up the misers. There is the eccentric Miss Blandy, of Oxfordshire, who poisoned her father as a means for promoting her matrimonial projects; the highly luxurious and wealthy people who have tried to poison, not with vulgar lead and arsenic, but with silver and gold; the aberrant wife who poured poison down her husband's open mouth, as he was sleeping. Then there are cases where a three-volume plot might easily be elaborated—where a man, or woman, has actually taken poison, and secreted poison about the effects of an innocent person, that suspicion and punishment might be directed towards the innocent

person. These are cases out of Christison. That learned professor gives a word of caution against a practice that has received considerable laudation. Some preparation of antimony 'is often foolishly used, in the way of amusement, to cause sickness and purging, and likewise to detect servants who are suspected of making free with their mistress's tea-box or whisky-bottle; and in both of these ways alarming effects have sometimes been produced.' It is curious to see the race between sin and science: how the tests of the chemist even more than keep up with the craft of the murderer. Some of our most celebrated poisons are of comparatively recent date. Prussic acid was discovered, not so very many years ago, by Scheele—though poisoning by cherry-laurel was a well-known process; and the late Mr. Palmer, of Rugeley, first brought strychnine into such felonious popularity. The toxicologists can count up their martyrs to science. It is curious to observe how each advancing wave of time blots out the records of crime. The crime that was a national event becomes a tradition—is lost in a black abyss of forgetfulness. There, so far as we are concerned, let such traditions rest.

We come back, however, to the point of departure from whence we digressed. The culture of the medical man is also combined with a very large experience of life in its broadest bearings and its intensest moments. The education, instead of being confined to a single school, has very commonly been carried on at several great medical centres. Travel is more than ever becoming one of the marks of a highly-trained medical man. There is a period of leisure for nearly every medical man which, rightly used, may be one of unspeakable preciousness and im-

portance for him. This is the time that lies between the call to a profession and the obtaining any large share of work. As a rule, all preparatory studies have not done more than to break up the ground and prepare it for the fertilizing process. The real work is to be done when the mind is released from tutors and governors and can concentrate itself on the thought and work of maturer years. Travel is the opportunity that best enables a man to combine study, thought, and observation. It is astonishing what a large and increasing space is occupied in medical life by travel. It is now not at all uncommon for English medical students to spend a great deal of time at the medical schools of Paris and Vienna. They generally prefer Paris to Vienna, and London to either. The best medical men more than ever seem to be familiarized with the scientific medical thought of Germany. The custom of going out as medical officer to vessels is very largely on the increase. Many young men go with the steamers that traverse the regular ocean thoroughfares. Men who have risen to, or descended from, eminence have been glad to take positions on the great lines of steamers. They are found a most agreeable addition to all the social arrangements—with the drawback, however, of being obliged to subsist in a chronic state of flirtation. Others take longer voyages, and, generally speaking, seek a more adventurous line of life. Thus there are, among men I have known, those who have gone to the Greenland seas, round Cape Horn, to Australia, to India, and the Pacific islands, and have gone again and again, induced by the divine passion for knowledge and travel. There would be many competitors for the place of medical officer to travel with some of the

expeditions that now-a-days go round the world. What such travel might be can be seen, with admiring despair, in Darwin's 'Voyage of the Beagle.' Then many people, when they travel, are neither easy or happy unless they can afford the luxury of a 'medical attendant.' Some of the best specimens of medical literature that we have, are due to this interesting class of medical men. A Milor on his travels likes a parson, a doctor, and a traveller's major-domo; but the doctor is least easily dispensed with. In this way, by the medical education abroad, by travelling engagements, and by taking appointments on board ship, we have a travelled class of medical men who represent perhaps the most interesting, and certainly the most amusing, section of the profession. Wherever in this wide world the medical man goes, he can carry his work with him and his own letter of introduction. The wants which surgery and medicine relieve speak their own vehement, universal language, and stand in need of no interpreter. The lawyer can do no good with his law when once he is out of England. The clergyman must learn the language of the natives, and find his opportunity and his audience. But the medical man speaks the universal language, inasmuch as he answers a universal need. The philosopher and the parson can never be quite sure that they have done any good; the good is so remote and hidden, and it rarely happens that it is ascertained. But the surgeon goes to a man in a state of positive torture, and by a happy bit of carpentering puts him to rights, gives the intense happiness of a sudden cessation from intense pain, and at once earns a thrilling amount of very transitory gratitude. It would be only reciting truisms to speak of the immense generous good they

achieve. The amount of self-denying generosity which a physician can practise, and does, is simply incalculable, and there are indeed few of us who could not easily furnish a collection of instances.

The curiosities of medical life and practice are endless. If we hear very often of medical men doing arduous work for very scanty remuneration, sometimes there is an agreeable obverse of receiving very splendid remuneration for very scanty services. We know of a medical man whose duty it is to take lunch every day at a great castle belonging to a noble lord. The household is immense; and there is just the chance that there may be some case of indisposition demanding attention. He gets some of the best company and best lunches in England, and duly charges a guinea for each attendance. There is a very wealthy man near a great city, who cannot bear to be left for the night. There is a physician of great ability who drives out of town nightly to sleep at his residence; he is consequently debarred evening society, and if he goes out to dinner he has to leave his friends before wine. He has to charge his patient a thousand a year; and, I think, he works hard for his money. Sometimes the services are such that money cannot repay them. A friend of mine, a young medicus, had a standing engagement of four hundred a year to look after the health of an old lady. She required to be inspected three times a day, and make an exhibition of tongue and pulse. What made matters so aggravating was, that she was as strong as a horse, while the doctor was a delicate man. She was so selfish and perverse, that he was obliged to tell her that he would have nothing to do with her case. Similarly, I know the son of a rich man who proposed to pay a clar-

gyman several hundred pounds a year for leave to spend his evenings with him. The parson, however, was obliged to tell his rich friend, that he talked such intolerable twaddle, that he could not accept his company on any terms that could be named. But the oddest of these arrangements is the following. A medical man has been attending a patient several years, and yet he has never seen his patient. The gentleman firmly believes that he has an œsophagus of peculiar construction, and that he is accordingly liable at any moment to be choked. That help may be at hand whenever any sudden emergency may occur, he has a physician in the house night and day. The physician, being human, must needs take his walks abroad, and it becomes necessary to provide a substitute for him two hours a-day. Accordingly a doctor attends daily from twelve to two, fills up his time by disposing of an admirable lunch, and finds the gold and silver coin, in their usual happy combination, neatly put by the side of his plate, in tissue-paper. Up to the present date he has never had the pleasure of exchanging words with his interesting patient.

It is in medical biography, or, rather, medical autobiography, that we must look for our most valuable and authentic instances. Medical literature is not rich in this way; some half-dozen volumes would nearly include the whole. It is to be regretted, indeed, that the best medical men write the least; those who have obtained the highest rank in their profession, and who would have most of science, most of incident to impart. There is all the difference in the world between books that are written to obtain practice and books that are written out of the fulness of practice. . . . In medical autobiography we have such

charming narratives as those written by Sir Benjamin Brodie and Sir Henry Holland. There is no doubt that even fictitious narratives, such as 'Early Struggles,' in the 'Diary of a Late Physician,' really give us facts substantially as true as any which we find in regular memoirs. I myself know physicians of singular learning and ability, who for half a dozen years have not taken half a dozen guineas a year. Other men, by the happy use of dress and address, though inferior, leave them far behind. One instance is on record which might well be worked up into some narrative like Mr. Warren's. An able man waited and waited hopelessly till ruin stared him in the face. One night, when brooding on his miseries, he heard a bell ringing violently at his surgery door. Opening it, he found that a man had been thrown out of his cab and nearly killed, and they wanted to bring him into the surgery. The medical man found that there was concussion of the brain and dislocation of the shoulder-joint. His card-case showed that he was a man of birth and a well-known politician. He stopped some time at the surgeon's house, who was thus enabled to lay the foundation of a large and lucrative connection.

Dr. Denman, the father of the great Lord Chief Justice, and the grandfather of our new judge, who has so worthily been promoted to the bench, which he will adorn, prefixed an autobiographical narrative to his 'Introduction to the Practice of Midwifery.' He was educated at the Free School at Bakewell, and, going up to London to study at St. George's Hospital, he boarded and lodged with a hair-dresser at half-a-guinea a week. In six months his money was gone, and he thought, as a desperate chance, he might get a

surgeon's appointment on a King's ship. To his great astonishment, he passed, but he had to pawn his watch before he could join his ship. Once he tried to set up a practice, but he was obliged to betake himself to the royal navy again. However, he tried again. 'I had taken a small house in Oxendon Street; but I furnished only one parlour, thinking to complete it gradually as I was able, and I hired a maidservant, who cheated me very much. When I went into this house, excepting my furniture, I had but twenty-four shillings in the world, but I was out of debt.' He got on gradually, made a very happy marriage, bought houses, bought land, kept his coach, and, what, as a Bakewell man, pleased him immensely, he was called in to attend the Duchess of Devonshire. 'I was made happy,' he writes, 'by the birth of a son, which was an unexpected blessing, as I had given up all hopes of having any more children.' This son was the celebrated Lord Chief Justice. In time, Dr. Denman became the head of his profession.

Many similar instances might be supplied. Even John Hunter had to make his way amid the greatest difficulties, having to satisfy his brother William of his genius before he could satisfy the outside world. Sir James Simpson is another instance of a man who might have taken *nitor in adversum* as his motto. He was one of the poorest of poor students who flock to a Scottish university. There is a pretty little village called Inverkip on the Frith of Clyde, near which is Sir Michael Shaw Stewart's great place. He applied for the office of village surgeon, but, not having any local influence, the appointment was refused him. Sir James used to say that he felt a deeper amount of chagrin and

disappointment from this circumstance than from any other event in his life. Going before a famous pathologist for examination, the examiner was so pleased with him that he asked him to become his assistant. When Simpson became a candidate for the Chair of Midwifery at Edinburgh, the great local interests were again enlisted against him. It was alleged that his election would be prejudicial to the interests of hotel-keepers and city tradesmen, for it was not likely that many strangers would be induced to visit Edinburgh for the purpose of getting professional advice. It was not for the first time that the highest intellectual interests had been imperilled at Edinburgh by such petty considerations. As a matter of fact, no physician ever attracted such a number of visitors; the invalids came in shoals. Simpson once told his pupils that many of his best papers were written by the bedsides of his patients. His great principle, when he met with any apparently hopeless case, was to interrogate what nature did in the rare instances in which she effected cures. Simpson's great discoveries may be here enumerated; they form the most thrilling page of modern medical history. His first great achievement was that he procured chloroform undiluted, and discovered the effects of the vapour. This great discovery alone would suffice to associate his name with that of Harvey. That night of the 28th of November, 1847, is much to be remembered, when this great discovery was made. He then demonstrated the possibility of banishing pain and subjecting it to human control. There are now a great many manufactories of chloroform in Edinburgh alone—one that makes several million doses a year. His great surgical invention is acu-

pressure—stopping blood from cut arteries by the use of metallic needles. His third great achievement was his contributions to that great work in which Dr. William Budd has pre-eminently laboured. This is to endeavour to *stamp out* contagious diseases as completely as the poleaxe could exterminate the rinderpest. His last great work was in the direction of hospital reform. How was it, he asked, that, in the hospital, the mortality in cases of amputation was one in thirty, and elsewhere one in 180. Hospitalism has its special evils, that are fatal in these palaces of human suffering. Sir James Simpson's final suggestion goes to the root of the matter—that all staircases, etc., should be outside the building, and that no one ward should ever have even the slightest chink of communication with another.

This last reform of Sir James Simpson's is especially important. It is not too much to say that all the great triumphs of surgery, such as those in lithotritry and ovariectomy, have been practically neutralized by foul hospital air, to which is due one-half of the deaths in our great metropolitan hospitals. In surgical wards there is a condensation of foul air, and, in addition, the specific poisonous effluvia given off by foul air. Mr. Spencer Wells is famous for that wonderful operation by which the lingering agony of years is prevented by the knife being used under anæsthetics. He generally uses the new anæsthetic methylene, which, in many cases, is preferable to chloroform. He found that there was a large mortality in hospitals, which was reduced to one-eighth in private practice. St. George's Hospital has now a small institution for ovariectomy at Wimbledon, an example which may be extensively followed. It is to be hoped that

in the magnificent seaside institutions that are so much increasing among us there will be a conspicuous adherence to the principle of the cottage hospital. The National Hospital at Ventnor is constructed on the cottage principle, and we have before had occasion in these pages to testify to its wonderful efficiency.

A case which, some time ago, was tried in the Court of Queen's Bench illustrates, in a striking manner, some of the dangers that belong to the annual national migration to the seaside, and also suggests some very large and important considerations affecting the national health. Without going fully into the details of a peculiarly painful case, it will be sufficient to mention the salient facts. Sea air having been ordered for a child by a medical man after an attack of scarlatina, a lady took her nurse, governess, and children to the coast, and hired apartments without telling the lodging-house keeper of the nature of the illness in her family. After a time this most infectious of all infectious diseases broke out afresh, apparently from the neglect of the proper disinfecting processes, and the poor lady lost two of her children, and the unhappy landlady of the lodging-house also lost two little ones. The anguish of parental grief cannot be measured by a pecuniary standard, but actual medical and funeral expenses, and the injury done to the course of business, are susceptible of being assessed, and the jury gave the lodging-house keeper substantial damages. It is impossible not to feel commiseration for the seaside visitors who experienced this blow in addition to their own calamities, but the verdict was not unwarranted by the facts, nor, to use regretfully a harsh word, undeserved. Those

who are acquainted with the history of special classes among the poor are aware how much deadly illness there has been at times in the families of laundresses and pawnbrokers, who have had under their charge the raiment of fever patients, to which no purifying process had been applied. (Still greater mischief has been done by milk which has been adulterated with water taken from some impure source.) We know, also, of cases where lodgings or furnished houses have been let, in the holiday season of the year, after the occurrence of contagious illness, and yet no disinfectants have been used, and no honest warning has been given. It must increasingly be felt how necessary are some caution and judgment in making holiday arrangements. It is comparatively easy for a lodging-house keeper to recover damages from a well-to-do family in a case where fever has been propagated through a want of care and candour; but, if the converse case had occurred—and it happens in at least an equal degree—it is hardly likely that substantial damages could be obtained from the landlord, even if bereaved fathers, in their grief, should be inclined to seek them. Scarlet fever slays in this country annually some twenty thousand people, and disables, more or less, for a longer or shorter time, a hundred thousand more. Yet, humanly speaking, the larger amount of this mortality might be averted by the processes of disinfection, separation, and, we may add, a religious adherence to truth.

It is not pleasant to think of the successive steps in the history of the sad case to which we have alluded, yet they illustrate the dangers of the travelling public, and might explain the apparently mysterious origin of many a simi-

lar attack. The mischief arose with a convalescent patient going to the seaside. We easily picture him going to the terminus in a London cab, travelling in a public railway carriage, then travelling in another public conveyance, and finally deposited in a public lodging-house. Early convalescence is often a most dangerous period in the disorder, when minute particles from the skin—invisible, impalpable, take wings, and become elements of danger, multiplying seeds of disease and death. It is safer to travel in a carriage with parcels of nitroglycerine than with such a patient. If our national sanitary arrangements were in a satisfactory state such a case would be certified from the London to the local physician, and, both on road and rail, special carriages would be provided, or the ordinary carriages be at once disinfected. Or if, as is usual in this country, such things must be left in private hands, there is a proper treatment which would entirely, or almost entirely, annihilate the danger of contagion. Many of our readers will recollect the piteous case set forth some time back by Dr. Bradley, the present head of University College, when he was head master of Marlborough College. He wanted to know, in the columns of the 'Times,' and various afflicted parents made the same inquiry, when it would be safe for a boy recovering from scarlet fever to return to his home. Scarlatina is almost the one terrible rock ahead which public and private schools have to fear. Many of us know very sad stories of the premature deaths of the young, and the losses and even ruin of schoolmasters through this terrible visitation. It is not every school which has the vitality of Marlborough College to withstand such

trials. In answer to these appeals, the whole theory and practice of disinfection was clearly set forth by competent medical authority. Such obvious methods were suggested as the isolating the patient, the anointing him from head to foot with camphorated olive oil, the destruction or most thorough cleansing of all things infected, the use of entirely untainted clothes; and then we were assured that patients might be restored to society after a very limited quarantine. The natural apprehension would be that these simple means might not prove sufficient; but the real fact is that it is extremely difficult to make people resort even to such simple means as these. Not one hundredth part is found of the energy in preventing disease that is employed in attempting to work its cure. What is wanted is a wider teaching of the elementary principles of such matters, and a greater degree of courage and conscience in applying them.

The fact is, that the prevention of diseases should be more regarded than it is, as a true end and scope of medical science. It is to the credit of medical men that they are more and more devoting their best energies in this direction. The skill of medical diagnosis has been carried to the utmost, but not with the result of any corresponding subjugation of disease. Indeed, it is a humiliating fact, that in those chest cases, where medical science has made the most marvellous discoveries, the actual amount of disease is probably greater than ever it was. The doctors are even quarrelling among themselves, whether certain illnesses are contagious or non-contagious. There is no doubt that scarlatina is contagious; but at the time of the illness of the Prince of Wales, it was sharply

debated whether typhoid fever was infectious or not. Even the fact of such a discussion is hardly creditable, for it might have been thought that scientific men, by a scientific induction of facts, could have set such a question at rest by this time. But we feel quite certain, especially in days when people travel and sojourn away from home, that no case of illness should be found to exist which any opinion entitled to respect should consider infectious, but it should be surrounded with safeguards, and so be saved from becoming the source of those terrible domestic tragedies with which we are all so unhappily familiar.

We have now brought our readers to a point to which we have been working up in the course of this paper, a point of extreme practical importance and urgency, on which the opinions of the public and their suffrages should be collected. We wish to draw more particular attention to a subject which we have just lightly touched on, one which we believe cannot be too much ventilated and discussed among general readers, and on which they are qualified to form an opinion, and to take action upon it. The theory involved is extremely simple and interesting, albeit strictly scientific; but the practical importance of it is enormous. Somewhere in the dim perspective many of us can discern the promise of a golden age, when all curable accidents will be cured, and all preventible diseases will be prevented. There can be no doubt but a simple contagious disease is susceptible of being stamped out. We stamped out the cattle plague, and if the plagues of men touched the same obvious and immediate pecuniary interests as the plagues of cattle, we might stamp out similar calamities among human

beings. To a certain extent the history of the small-pox shows how much can be done this way. In the remarks we are about to make we most especially acknowledge our obligations to Dr. William Budd's writings and teachings on the subject, who has developed his views, full of import to the happiness and well-being of humanity, with immense ability and experience, and much literary skill. The theory is, that any contagious disease can be eradicated; or, at all events, limited within a very slender area; and that various diseases are in reality contagious, such as typhoid fever, and consumption, where the ordinary medical and general mind does not admit the fact of the contagiousness. If we resort to the primitive processes of counting noses, or listening for the largest amount of shouting, we shall decide against the theory; but at present legitimate argument and logical deduction appear to be in its favour.

Mr. Disraeli's policy was lately denounced as a policy of sewage. What has been called by some a policy of sewage has been more properly called by others a question of life and death. We do not mind Mr. Disraeli and his friends having a policy of sewage, but it is essential that the policy should be accurate and enlightened. The advocates of the contagion theory have no weakness for sewage, especially in an olfactory point of view. They say, also, that it places disease under the most favourable conditions for the consummation of its evil mission. But they assert, in opposition to former theories of the Board of Health—that has an unlimited command of print and pay—that sewerage, in itself, does not breed fever and infection, unless it is charged with specific ingredients of con-

tamination. Infectious diseases are only communicated by the virus of specific poison. Many of us, in the course of the holiday season of the year, accumulate a collection of instances on the subject. In the famous cities of the Continent, and in exquisite Swiss villages, we have the most noisome stinks and sights, yet we hear nothing of fever. In fact, it almost seems a rule that where heaven throws the greatest beauty and magnificence, man should exhibit the greatest abominations. Natural beauty goes, like King Cophetua's beggar-maid, in rags. Clovelly, in Devonshire, is the most romantic spot we know in the western land, and till recently, it was the most undisguisedly dirty. But all through the West of England, and, indeed, we are afraid, all over the three kingdoms, we shall find lovely villages that, despite their loveliness, will give the utmost offence to sight and smell. Yet, for whole decades of years no infectious illness is heard of in these villages; and then, suddenly, fever or small-pox break out, and, to say the least of it, simply decimate the humble inhabitants. The contagionists will assert that the evil state of things was comparatively harmless until charged with a specific virus. One fact bearing on the subject will be fresh in the recollection of all readers. Many years ago, the Thames began to stink horribly in the hot months. The Law Courts broke up, the Houses of Parliament were saturated with chloride of lime, the river steamers lost their traffic, and business men went miles out of their way, in order to avoid crossing a City bridge. 'India is in revolt, and the Thames stinks,' were the two national humiliations bracketed by our severe friend, 'the intelligent

foreigner.' It so happened, also, that a Thames waterman died of the cholera; and that unfortunate waterman created the utmost consternation in the country. A frightful outbreak of cholera and fever was expected. But nothing of the kind happened. The health of the metropolis was remarkably good; the death-rate below the average, especially in the diseases supposed to result from poisonous emanations. There was certainly a failure in the supposed connection between epidemics and a bad sanitary state of things; and the suggestion arises that we were mercifully saved the introduction of some element that might have wrought all the misery we dreaded.

When the Prince of Wales was ill, we all of us, unhappily, acquired some kind of notion on the subject of typhoid fever. Each morning paper became a kind of daily 'Lancet.' It is not much to the credit of the medical profession that there has been a great deal of confusion between typhus and typhoid. The latter, from which our Prince suffered, is totally distinct from typhus, and has its own distinctive marks, as much as small-pox itself. An eminent physician suggests that it should be called the *pythogenetic* fever, which is, however, begging the question at issue, which is the great medical problem of our time, whether this disease is the result of malaria or of contagion. Dr. Budd argues that as it is in typhoid fever, so it is in small-pox; as it is in small-pox, so it is in measles; as it is in measles, so it is in scarlatina; as it is in

scarlatina, so it is in malignant cholera; amid all varying phenomena, *one thing constant, a specific morbid cause*, 'a cause which is neither a permanent product of the soil or air, or of particular seasons, but which is susceptible of transmission from place to place; which breeds as it goes, and then again dies out, or becomes dormant, without leaving any sign to mark its tract.'

The slaughter of the Franco-Germanic war is repeated year by year in England by preventible diseases. This enormous mass of disease furnishes ample material for infection on every side. A most infinitesimal germ, invisible, impalpable, would suffice to infect a single human body, and that body might suffice to infect very many others. It may be said that the link of connection is not always sufficiently clear between the infector and the *infected*. In a vast proportion of cases this is clear enough, and it is no argument where it is not. People have been taken ill of small-pox even in prison, under solitary confinement; yet how could we doubt of real, though remote infection. Let each individual do his part in the holy crusade against ignorance and disease. Let it be asked amid contemplated legislation whether the State cannot give effectual hope. We may then hope to transmit to our children their heritage of earth and time less stained by scalding tears and passions of regret, than it has been to us and to our fathers.

FREDERICK ARNOLD.

WILLIE BLAKE'S TRIAL.

BY 'SARCELLE.'

AUTHOR OF 'ONLY A VAGABOND,' 'TWO CRUISES OF THE ROSE,' 'TWO TALES OF ONE SHARK,' ETC.

CHAPTER I.

WILD-FOWL SHOOTING.

A CALM autumn afternoon on the shores of the Bristol Channel. A man, with a gun by his side, is seated in most contemplative attitude, on a seaweed-covered rock.

The man is my intimate friend, Willie Blake, a true passage in whose life seems to me of sufficient interest to be related here, with only its truth and its possible warning effect as its apology. At this particular moment he was musing over his past life.

Truly, Willie's life had been a hard one. I do not mean hard so much in the actual sense of struggle for existence, endurance of privation, and daily toil; though our hero had had a fair share of all these.

He had travelled about a good deal in different parts of the world, frequently obtaining good commercial and other appointments, working them for a time most assiduously and conscientiously, in spite of an innate detestation for all kinds of work; but whenever, at the end of six months' or a year's toil, he saw himself with a few bank-notes in his *soi-disant* savings-box, then he would incontinently resign his appointment—often to his employer's sincere regret—and be off to woods and wilds with dear old rod and gun; for he was an enthusiastic lover of nature, and a keen sportsman. When his money was nearly spent, he would return sadly to the cities, and wait,

Micawber-like, for 'something to turn up.' In this he was lucky; he seldom had to wait long.

But of course this desultory system of alternate work and play was hardly the way to get on in the world; and Willie's few distant relatives—he had no near ones—would often shake their heads as they talked of him, and call him 'rolling-stone,' 'ne'er-do-weel,' and similar epithets, by which 'your true, hard business-man expresses his contempt for any life that is not dedicated heart and soul to Mammon-worship.

But Willie was now nearly thirty—I write of only a year ago—and he was beginning to feel, more keenly than ever, certain ardent cravings for affection, sympathy, and domestic comfort. For in this man's heart was a deep-spring of rare tenderness, seeking only a fit object on which to lavish its treasures. Yet poor Willie, by his Bohemian mode of life, had effectually isolated himself from domestic and social relations. He had wandered over a great part of Europe, and visited many fair scenes in the New World, alternately making money and spending it; happy sometimes in successful sport, and yet often troubled with a strange aching at his heart when he saw men as young as himself, or even younger, with loving wives and prattling children.

Little children! How the man

loved them! Never wearied by their chattering, never tired of inventing babyish little games to amuse them, and himself always happy while he was making them so. Why did he stay on for another week, two years ago, at the rough little inn in the Peak, after heavy storms and continued rains had brought down such a flood as completely put a stop to the trout and grayling fishing which was the object of his holiday? Simply because his landlord had a golden-haired daughter of five, for whom Willie had conceived a great affection; and all day long they would play together; and often the fair child would climb on his knee, throw her little white arms round his neck, and say, in tones of genuine sincerity, 'I do love you; don't I?' Poor, simple, warm-hearted old Willie! If you are inclined to despise him, *ami lecteur*, better read no further.

By a strange fatality, Willie had hardly ever been thrown into the society of women of his own class.

From one or two bad samples he had seen at a distance, and judged—perhaps not altogether unjustly—to be intensely cold, proud, egotistical, and superficial, he had conceived a general distrust of the middle-class girls of the period. He was much more attracted to the simple, hearty, genuine daughters of the 'petite bourgeoisie.' He considered that, in the lower social scale, at any rate, the women were always far superior to the men. But his singular views on these points could hardly be said to have been founded on much actual experience; for fate had hitherto denied him feminine society, except that of a few of the predatory daughters of Bohemia, in France, and elsewhere, for some of whom he had occasionally had a passing fancy; yet always felt that his heart

demanding something they could not give, however much they might be flattered and touched by the respectful tenderness of the young Englishman—so different from the ribald vulgarity they were accustomed to. Over these memories we must not linger. Willie himself looked back on them with pain; and he was thinking, longingly, of possible affection; of some pure, fair young creature, yet to be met, on whom he might bestow all the warmth of his bright, loving nature, in the constant endeavour to make her life one of perfect happiness. He thought, foolishly and romantically, how delightful it would be to raise from the lower ranks of life some lovely and loving girl, who already had aspirations for brighter surroundings, and higher intellectual culture—aspirations which she would scorn the idea of gratifying at the expense of self-respect and fair fame; but which he, if fate should bring them together, would find the highest and purest pleasure in fulfilling.

Such were some of the dreamings that passed through the mind of Wild Willie—as he was often dubbed by his fellow clerks, more quiet and practical—as he sat on the rock, looking on to a flat expanse of mud, darkened here and there with patches of marine vegetation; its wet and shining surface tinged with a coppery hue by the setting of the October sun, where the waves of the Bristol Channel slowly advanced towards the crumbling sea-wall of which Willie's rock had once formed part.

A sound in the air, a welcome sound, a rustling of many distant wings, and quacking as of many ducks, called his attention back to his immediate surroundings.

'A flock of sheldrakes, by Jove!'

thought Willie, and he rose from his rock to watch the flight of the birds, as they passed in varying line, far out of range, towards the mouth of a muddy little river, half a mile off, where, though the light was already beginning to get somewhat indistinct, he fancied he saw them descend on to a favourite feeding-ground, where he had already found many a plump victim. So, with cautious tread, after knocking out his pipe, he walked swiftly onward in that direction. As he walks, let us take a good look at him. A fine, straight-made fellow is Willie Blake. Nearly six feet in height, with broad shoulders and full chest, curly brown hair, and long beard, large dark grey eyes, bright and honest, and a clear, wholesome, sun-bronzed complexion. He wears a low Scotch cap, a rough pilot jacket, flushing trousers, and huge sea-boots, nearly up to his thighs. A rough game-bag round his shoulders, and a good strong old double-barrelled muzzle-loader, capable of taking extra heavy charges, and deadly at long ranges, in his hand. When he had done the first quarter of a mile with the swift, swinging, noiseless stride he had learnt on far western prairies, he began to bend low, and walk still more carefully; soon he was on his hands and knees; and when he arrived within a hundred and fifty yards of where he judged the ducks to be, he lay flat on the beach below the sea-wall, and proceeded very slowly, in this somewhat difficult posture; avoiding, as he dragged himself onward, every bit of stick or dry seaweed that looked brittle, every fragment of shell that might crackle beneath his weight.

Soon, peering very cautiously over a high rock, he felt that his persevering stalk was going to be

rewarded; for there, within fifty yards of him, were more than a dozen fine sheldrakes, peacefully feeding on a dark patch of succulent weed. So quiet had been his approach, that his presence was evidently unsuspected, and they actually fed towards him; so that most of them soon came ten yards nearer. Here was a grand chance, for two or three of them were in a line, within easy range. But Wild Willie was no 'pot-shot;' he clapped his hands; then came a loud fluttering and screaming, as the horrified birds rose wildly up, and then the sure and swift discharge of the trusty old brown barrels. Down dropped four birds with a pleasant 'thud, thud,' on to the beach beyond, while a fifth, hit in the body, managed to wing its way a hundred yards farther, and fell close to the advancing tide.

With a joyous shout the sportsman bounded after this last one, and here the huge boots did him good service, for he was soon knee-deep in clammy mud, and would have sunk still farther had he not rushed on as swiftly as possible. A moment later the bird, now quite dead, would have been carried away by the tide. He picked it up, and hastened back to collect the other four. His game-bag already contained a good sample of wild fowl, for the weather had been cold and stormy, and they were unusually numerous.

So he was obliged to carry this last crowning trophy in his hands, and glorious the big, heavy birds looked, with their dark wings, white breasts, and ruddy necks. He filled his little brown pipe, trudged away joyfully towards the town of O——, where the lamps were already beginning to glow in the autumn twilight; and, for a time, all his thoughts were of

sport, sporting, till he arrived at his dull little lodgings, and handed the magnificent game to his unsympathising landlady, a crusty, hard-featured, harsh-voiced old female, who looked with great disgust at the thick mud which covered his boots and parts of his clothes, and evidently had misgivings as to the trouble of plucking the birds.

So then poor Willie's imagination began to work, and he thought how much nicer it would have been to have been welcomed by a bonnie little wife, who would have said, he fondly imagined, something like this—'How late you are, you naughty boy! Do make haste and get into dry clothes and slippers, and make yourself cosy in the arm-chair, and tell me all about it. What! all these beautiful birds! You don't mean to say you really shot all these! What lovely creatures! You dear, darling, clever old Willie!'

Something affectionate and enthusiastic like this, followed in natural sequence by a warm kiss, would have been pleasant, certainly.

But Dame Watson only said—'Really, Mr. Blake, I do wonder how a gentleman can like to get into such a state with mud and muck for a lot of nasty, strong-flavoured birds, as the lot of 'em isn't worth a pound of beef-steak; and I think you might contrive to get a little more of the nasty mud off before you come into a respectable house!'

So poor, weary Willie, with a sigh that was partly for the imaginary wife, made a mild apology to the irate lodging-house keeper, took off the objectionable sea-boots in the passage, went to his solitary little room, and again mused mournfully, the delight he had felt in his glorious afternoon's

sport having almost disappeared in the chill of his reception, and the absence of any sympathising ear to listen to the recital he would so gladly have made of his adventures.

What young sportsman does not feel this need strongly, after an eventful day's shooting or fishing? Half our pleasure, after such a day, is to 'fight our battles o'er again,' with congenial and sympathising friends.

But in half an hour his dinner was on the table, and he felt a little better.

It was a nice little dinner, truly, and not likely to be less appreciated for being the direct produce of the rod and gun which adorned each side of the little fireplace. A fine grey mullet, caught in P—— Harbour the day before, preceded a succulent little teal, which Willie had knocked over on the wing as it flew over the sea, and actually swum out for, like any retriever.

Dame Watson had many faults, but her detractors could not say that she was a bad cook. So the meal was a good one, moreover, the Guinness was comforting.

But still the young man's imagination, ever busy with impressions of his solitude and a fancied contrast, would cause him to see vividly, in his mind's eye, another chair at the opposite side of the little square table, tenanted by a fair young wife. And he sighed again, as he laid down knife and fork, and betook himself to the fireside and his pipe.

He inwardly complained of his lonely lot, and wondered why fate had denied him what he felt himself to be so well fitted for. Was it because his youth had been somewhat wild and wayward?

Scarcely so, for he had ever been more sinned against than sinning; and he knew many men,

now comfortably established in real homes, who had managed in the past to conceal from the world's eye sins far graver than any of poor Willie's peccadilloes. Still, reasoning with himself, he found that if he had been less of a Bohemian, if he had persevered steadily in one course, dry and uncongenial though business might be to a nature like his, he would surely both have progressed by this time to the attainment of an income entitling him to marriage, or, at any rate, engagement, and would, in the meantime, have created for himself a circle of pleasant, social relations, wherein he might, long ere this, have found all that was now lacking.

But then, if he had done so, where would have been the travels, the adventures, and the bright reminiscences of wild sports in distant lands, which seemed to rise up pleasantly in his brain as the thin blue smoke from the little brown pipe curled gracefully up to mingle with the darker smoke from the fire? No, surely it was not too late yet; he had surely profited so well by the vicissitudes of his past life, as to be able to appreciate domesticity in a way he never otherwise could have done. And he was not so badly off, after all. He was getting two hundred a year as corresponding clerk in a London shipping house, where his knowledge of foreign languages and countries made him so valuable, that, with energy and perseverance, he might reasonably hope for speedy advancement. Ay, truly, that was the right thought, and he resolved that, at the expiration of his fortnight's holiday, of which only four days now remained, he would return to London, work very hard, endeavour to secure a good position in the

office, devote less time and money to sports and amusements, and seek, if possible, to get into a little quiet society. He might go and board, for example, with some 'cheerful, musical family,' as per advertisement!

A capital idea! He would, on his return, collect a few such advertisements, and go to look at a few of the families who offered such delightful homes for such very moderate remuneration. What if the landladies, in such case, might be match-making old ladies, desiring to get their 'cheerful, musical' daughters comfortably married? In the warmth of his heart, this big child of near thirty innocently thought that he should be only too delighted to marry *any* young lady, and that he could make *any* girl happy, unless she were really downright ugly, and possessed of a diabolical temper.

For Wild Willie, the kindest-hearted, best-tempered fellow in the world, had an utter horror of the opposite qualities. He also had a very great objection to solitude, so he soon adjourned to the smoking-room of a neighbouring hotel, where a few of the town tradesmen and neighbouring farmers used to meet to discuss, over their 'church-wardens' and evening grog, small local politics, sewage, the weather, and the crops, and other matters of dubious interest for a stranger. Blake had, even in this short time, become a decided favourite with this quiet little circle, the younger members of which were very fond of getting him to spin one of his numerous yarns anent foreign travel and adventure.

On this particular evening the room was honoured by the presence of no less a personage than the head gamekeeper of Lord T——, the richest nobleman and

largest landowner in the county. He listened with interest to the account of Willie's afternoon's sport among the wild fowl, and said, approvingly—

'You seem to have done uncommonly well, sir. I like to see a gentleman fond of real sport of any kind.'

'I suppose *you* see plenty,' returned Willie.

'Yes, indeed, we have got as fine a stock of game, I will say, as any estate in England. We mean killing a rare lot to-morrow.'

'Ay, how's that?'

'Why, the Duke of B——, and Lord H——, and one or two more, are coming over to shoot with my lord. We shall beat some of the best coverts, and I expect we shall find some seven or eight hundred head of pheasants, besides any quantity of hares and partridges in the open.'

'By Jove, I should like to see the sport! Would it be possible?'

'Possible, to be sure, sir; easy enough, if you don't mind joining the beaters.'

'Oh, I'm not proud, and I'm game for any amount of rough work.'

'That's all right then; but mind you put on rough old clothes, for you are sure to get them torn, and a pair of stout leggings, too; for some of our coverts are precious rough.'

'All right! Now where must I come to to-morrow morning, and what time?'

'You come straight to my house; I'll give you a plain direction how to find it. The beaters are to muster there at half-past ten, and their lordships will be on the ground shortly afterwards. I suppose you're not afraid of beginning the day with a five-mile walk?'

'No, nor ten, if needs be.'

'Well, then, there's a bit of a

chart that will show you the way as straight as a line. Now I must be off. No, thank you, sir; one glass of grog is my allowance. Good-night.'

'Good-night, Mr. Davies.'

CHAPTER II.

TAME-FOWL SHOOTING.

A GRAND autumn morning. Not a cloud in the sky, a warm sun rapidly drying the dew-moistened surface of the fields where lie the unconscious hares and partridges, of the mellow-tinted woods swarming with gorgeous pheasants, so many hundreds of which are destined to fall this day before the hot breech-loaders of the aristocratic sportsman. A few minutes before the appointed time, Willie Blake, looking none the worse for his walk, walked into a field adjoining Mr. Davies' house, where that important functionary and another keeper, resplendent in attire, and awe-inspiring in general appearance, were mustering the motley lot of farm labourers and idlers who were to go through the arduous duties of beaters for a small pecuniary consideration. He was distributing to each, as he answered to his name on the head keeper's memorandum book, a little bit of blue ribbon, which, affixed to hat, button-hole, or any conspicuous part of their rustic apparel, served to distinguish them from any of the unlicensed *profanum vulgus*, or general loafers, who might try to get into fields or coverts to see the sport.

'Good morning, Mr. Blake; you are punctual, I see,' said the man in authority.

'Good morning, Mr. Davies. Splendid day for the sport.'

'Capital! Do you mind wearing this rosette? All right. And, you know, you mustn't take offence

at being ordered about and shouted at. Keep by me for the present. Ah, Mr. Watson, delighted to see you! Going through the coverts with us? Capital! I remember how you went through the roughest bits last year. Some coverts would never have been thoroughly beaten but for you." This encomium was addressed to a handsome young farmer, about Blake's age, who was one of Lord T——'s principal tenants, and a very keen sportsman, working hard indeed to make his farm productive, but devoting the whole of his few leisure hours to horse, rod, and gun. 'This is my friend Mr. Blake, from London; fond of a bit of sport, like yourself. Come to see them kill my pheasants,' said the old keeper, with a pardonably egotistical use of the possessive pronoun. 'He says he's not afraid of hard work, so he can't do better than go with you.'

While awaiting the arrival of the shooting party, the two young men entered into interesting conversation on congenial subjects. The young farmer, who seemed exceedingly intelligent and well-educated, soon began to enlarge upon agricultural grievances.

He explained to Willie how annoying it was for him, as a farmer and a sportsman, to see the land he occupied under Lord T—— overrun with game, of which he dared not shoot a single head.

'Why, you'll hardly believe me, but I have counted as many as seventy hares in one of my fields. And every hedge-side is full of rabbits. I don't mind the pheasants and partridges—his lordship may keep as many of them as he likes—but it is the confounded ground game. The old hares and rabbits eat away nearly all the profit I can make out of the farm,

working as hard as I can, and not one may I touch.'

'But I thought rabbits were not game now?' remarked Willie.

'They are not, but there is a special clause in the lease, reserving them to the landlord; so it comes to the same thing. Fancy how it aggravates me, when I take my gun out to shoot a few of the larks that are tearing up my young wheat, or try for a plover or two, to see the hares sitting up and staring at me within easy range, and the blessed rabbits never whisking into their holes till I'm within twenty yards of them.'

'Awfully annoying, certainly. I don't think I could help letting drive at one now and then.'

'That wouldn't do at any price. But you will wonder that, grumbling at the game as I do, I should be here to-day to beat, and help his lordship and his friends to shoot the game I feed for them. It is from pure love of sport. If I can't shoot myself, I like to see others shoot. Here they come. We shall have some rough work soon. Glad you've got the right sort of togs on. No, better not smoke now; it is hardly the thing before lunch.'

Soon, each of the distinguished sportsmen, in elegant costume, with his two loaders behind him, carrying spare guns and good supply of cartridges, was *en route* for his post outside the first little covert. Then the line of beaters, marshalled by the anxious old keeper, entered said covert, and crashed their way laboriously through it, Blake and Watson bravely taking the part nearest to the outside, which was much the thickest and roughest. Soon could be heard from keepers, loaders, and others, such cries as 'Hare to the right, my lord!' 'Rabbit on the left, your grace!' and 'Over!' as the gorgeous pheasants, startled

from their dignified strutting, flew hastily out of the covert, right over the expectant gunners.

So it went on, with quick cracking of guns in all directions, until the beaters got nearly to the end of the covert.

They had kept well in line, and maintained a constant clattering with their sticks, to prevent the pheasants—scores of which had not yet risen, but were running before them—from doubling back. So this corner, in front of which were posted the Duke of B—— and Lord T——, now contained a great quantity of game, which soon began to rise in 'bouquets,' said 'bouquets' resembling fireworks more than flowers, as the brilliant jewelled plumage of some hundred pheasants at once flashed up in the bright sunlight, to the accompaniment of rapid firing and clouds of smoke. There was a heavy contribution to the game-cart, the beaters emerged, and formed themselves into a line across some stubbles, which the whole party crossed, and which yielded many hares and partridges. Then another covert, still rougher than the last, with a bigger 'bouquet.' Then a bog, through which the beaters floundered knee-deep; then more stubble, and so on to lunch-time.

Let us take a glance at the preparations. On the lawn, in front of the under keeper's house, is erected a large marquee, bearing the name of Edgington, wherein is a long table, adorned with much lordly silver and cut glass, and flowers, and many kinds of wine-glasses—graced, moreover, by the presence of 'the ladies,' at whom Willie glances, without feeling either the awe or admiration which are expressed in the countenances of the rustics, called forth, probably, more by the wondrous costumes of these aristocratic dames

than by pre-eminent beauty of form or feature.

And long rows of hares, pheasants, partridges, rabbits, and 'various,' are laid out on the grass to be counted—an imposing array. The tired beaters, hot, muddy, and bramble-torn, are ranged along the side of a wall, to receive each his hunch of bread and cheese and mug of beer; while, in the yard of the house keepers, loaders, and a few tenants are helping themselves to a substantial 'snack;' for there is a huge joint of cold beef, a bushel of potatoes in their jackets, plenty of big loaves of bread, and two barrels of sound ale. Willie Blake and his new friend, Watson, were making a hearty lunch in the yard, after being congratulated by the head keeper on the gallant manner in which they had gone through the rough work of the morning. The duke's loader, Mr. Peters, who had also remarked the two young men, and was hob-nobbing with Lord H——'s valet, came up and politely offered them a glass of excellent sherry.

While drinking it, Blake's eyes chanced to wander carelessly through a neighbouring window, which was that of the kitchen of the keeper's house. Something he saw behind said window caused him almost to drop his glass—and he certainly blushed! What was it? Only a face, and one he had never seen before.

But *such* a face! Such big, deep black eyes; such a wild profusion of rich dark-brown hair; such a pretty pert little *nez retroussé*, and such sweet red, pouting, kissable-looking lips—that Willie felt, as he afterwards expressed it, more forcibly than elegantly, 'struck all of a heap.' And, did his senses deceive him, or did the lovely apparition blush and half smile at Blake before she turned her pretty

head away? We fancy she did and are not at all surprised at it; for certainly Willie was the handsomest man in the yard among the gay crowd of farmers, keepers, and *valetaille*.

Our hero, with all the sudden ardour of his warm, impulsive nature, said to himself, 'What a glorious girl! How I could love her! I wonder if I could contrive to speak to her!' And he turned to Watson, and asked him, in careless tone, 'Who is that girl in yonder, with the black eyes? She is not bad-looking.'

'Oh, you mean Maggie Davies, the head keeper's daughter. She's come over here to help to-day. She is reckoned one of the prettiest lasses in these parts, and all the young chaps are crazed after her.'

'I don't wonder at it.'

Just then Mr. Watson was called away by Lord T——'s under steward, to help count the game, that he might report the numbers to the party in the marquee. Willie conceived an absurd idea for getting speech of the rustic beauty—an idea that could hardly have occurred to any one else in the world. Her father, the head keeper, had approached the corner where the provisions were, and was helping himself to a substantial slice of beef. Blake took a knife, and began cutting a piece of bread for him, when, by premeditated awkwardness, he made a slip, and inflicted a severe gash on his left thumb.

'Why, what are you about, Mr. Blake?' said Davies. 'Come, you must have that bound up at once. I can't afford to lose my best volunteer. Come inside. My daughter Maggie's a capital hand at anything of that sort.' Artful Willie was nothing loath, you may be sure. 'Here, Maggie, my wench, get a bit of clean rag, quick, and bind this young gentleman's hand

up. Don't be afraid, lass, he won't bite you; and he's not going to bleed to death, neither.'

For the lovely girl was blushing and trembling most needlessly, as she approached, with basin and linen rag, to perform the simple operation. What a wonderful expression of respectful admiration did the rascal contrive to throw into those dark grey eyes of his, as he said—

'A thousand thanks, Miss Davies! A man might wish for a much severer wound, to be tended by *your* hands.'

Pretty Maggie, generally ready enough with her tongue, and capable of making very smart retorts to the blundering compliments of her rustic admirers, somehow could not find words to reply; but when Willie added, 'I hope we shall meet again,' her looks seemed to say pretty plainly that she hoped so too. It really seemed to be a case of love at first sight with the pair of them.

But soon the shooting party was off again to fresh coverts. And still Blake and Watson took the roughest bits, and went into places that the hired beaters obstinately shirked. In one covert, particularly, just at the outside, the tangled mass of natural and artificial undergrowth was so thick that it was impossible to walk either on it or through it; yet these two charged it, flung themselves on it, rolled over a little way, sunk down among elders and brambles, up again, another jump, another roll, and so on—to the vast amusement of four stately dames who were now walking with the gunners in the field on the outside of the covert, and the great satisfaction of the keepers, who had hardly ever succeeded in getting this spot thoroughly beaten before. Willie glanced at the haughty ladies, whose dresses made the gorgeous

plumage of the birds running before him look tame and sober by comparison, and he thought that Maggie was ten times prettier than any of these aristocrats, and wished that she were there to see him work. And all the time, as they went on, amid much shouting and clattering of sticks, and the encouraging cries of the keepers—'Good lads on the right!—into it!—good lads! Well done, Mr. Blake! Well done, Mr. Watson!'—only very few pheasants flew out; and an inexperienced spectator would have thought this plantation was nearly empty. But the birds, confiding in the almost impenetrable thickness of the undergrowth, ran on before the beaters until they were driven into the extreme corner, and then they rose—first by twos and threes, then by dozens, and at last literally by hundreds, falling thickly on to the ploughed land outside, or plumping down into the covert among the beaters, as the guns kept up a continuous fire, and the busy loaders could hardly hand the hot weapons 'quickly enough to their excited masters. What a massacre! But as to its being *sport*, Willie thought he preferred his long, cold, muddy stalks after duck or curlew, something really wild, to this wholesale slaughter of hand-fed birds, many of which had to be hit by the

sticks of the beaters before they would rise, knowing well what doom awaited them when they showed themselves above the young fir-trees. Then came more stubble, then more bog, where two or three snipe were bagged at long ranges, eliciting Willie's approbation; then another 'warm corner,' and by the time they had finished shooting this last, the shades of evening were beginning to fall over fields and plantations, nature seemed universally to demand repose, and soon the sportsmen drove away on Lord T——'s four-in-hand, amid cheers from tenants and beaters.

Blake went with Watson to help in the counting, and they found 858 pheasants, 330 hares, about 150 rabbits, ditto partridges, 2 woodcocks, 5 snipe, and 17 'various,' the latter including some waterhens, a wood-pigeon or two, and a big, tawny, semi-wild cat, whose tail one of the keepers cut off, that he might claim the usual reward for its destruction as 'vermin.'

Willie was naturally rather tired, and did not much relish the idea of walking back to C——. He had two invitations to stay the night, one from Farmer Watson, the other from Mr. Davies, both of whom had taken a great liking to him. We leave the reader to guess which he accepted.

(To be continued.)



THE TALK OF THE TOWN.

CHRISTMAS is close upon us again. Without intruding upon the special province of the preacher, we may venture to remark, that this season appears to come round uncommonly quick. Ah, what a sad fate it is, that as we grow older, the wings of time vibrate with increased velocity, and the seasons succeed each other much more hastily than of yore, and the month that is coming treads upon the heels of the month that is going, with an impatient rudeness we do not remember to have experienced in earlier times.

Another reflection forces itself upon us. Christmas does not seem to be the same that it used to be. In our youth we hailed it as a 'merry time,' as something to be looked forward to for itself alone. We felt happy, eminently cheerful, and enthusiastic at the thought. Why is it that we seem to regard it with such coldness now? Is it that the fire of enthusiasm has ceased to burn brightly, and that it costs us an effort to rake up the embers, and that we feel compelled to use some stimulating bellows each time if we would raise a flame or make the ashes glow? Or is it that our life has become so practical, our occupations so absorbing, that we positively have no spare moments for the indulgence of the soft, poetic feeling we once enjoyed so much when we gathered round the fire upon long winter evenings, and experienced no misgivings as to wasted moments, as we idly talked and laughed and fell in love and out again? The howling winter wind that roared around the country house and filled us with a strange delight; the sleet that

rattled against the window-panes, as if in angry protest against the mirth that laughed in-doors; the bright and piercing frost that bade us look up our skates and sleighs; why cannot we enjoy these aspects of Nature as we did a decade past? The plain fact is, increasing years and toil inevitably bring with them that inexorable life-shortener, Anxiety; and it is this that silences the merry sound of laughter, and jars the music of the Christmas chimes.

One of the most charming little books that I have met with lately, is called 'The Secret of Long Life,' and I earnestly advise everybody who has not yet read it, to do so at once. There is a careless repose about the style, an ineffable good-humour spread through every page, a detestation of bores and anxiety, combined with a hearty resolution to shun both; a comfortable self-reliance, and a genial habit of making the best of things, and not the worst, that make me yearn for the acquaintance of the author. Mark the recapitulation of his argument; it is simply delicious: 'The first element of longevity is the Idea; the second, Independence; the third, Indolence. Keep the spirit open to all impressions; avoid all unnecessary connections, political or otherwise; learn to be lazy. These things achieved, you may make a mark on the world; you will certainly enjoy life; you may possibly live so long as to be an archæological curiosity. Idea—Independence—Indolence—a modern triad—they combine the two mysteries of happiness and longevity—whereof the latter depends on the former. Look at it. A

constant current of ideas keeps the brain joyous and resourceful. A perfect spirit of independence makes a man devoid of fear, and enables him to walk erect, not only among poets and philosophers, but among kings and emperors, and other inferior personages. And a knowledge of what indolence means has a twofold delight, for it enables a man to live voluptuously while he thinks profoundly.' How easy the lesson seems to learn! How facile the acquisition and enjoyment of a century of years! Have I ideas? Well, I believe I have a notion or two, occasionally. But have I independence? Ah, good my master, how am I to have a perfect spirit of independence, and how am I to learn to be lazy, if the harsh necessities of existence compel me to continual toil? An unhappy queen once wondered why her starving subjects did not eat *brioche*, and I am afraid that the writer of this brief little book assumes, as a postulate, that he who would acquire long life must be started with a comfortable balance at his bankers; and his work—the evolution and publication of his ideas—is merely for the purpose of increasing that balance, and stocking his cellars with 'liquid sunshine' from the banks of the Rhine, the Marne, and the Charente. Besides, what are we to do with the thousand ills that flesh is heir to? No doubt, the man who has a busy mind, where he perpetually churns ideas; has no time for the contemplation of his health, and leaves pills and change of air for the solace of the sorry valetudinarian; such an one has no time to speculate upon the probable state of his liver, or whether this dish is too rich, or that particular wine is likely to agree with him; but there are ailments which, unfortunately, are

hereditary, and uncontrollable physical sufferings which may compel the most brilliant ideologist amongst us to thank God that the allotted days of man are but threescore years and ten. Long life is only desirable, nay, only tolerable, on the presumption of almost perfect health, and immunity from pain. One life-shortener there is, however, which any man with strong will may certainly avoid, and that is, anxiety. Of all the idle speculations in the world, the most profitless is perpetual worrying as to what to-morrow may bring forth. Perhaps the most needless of man's woes is disappointment. Some men live in a perpetual state of expectation, and if their own prophecies are not fulfilled to the letter, they allow themselves to sink into a temporary slough of despair, compared with which a week's sojourn at the Slough Station on the Great Western Railway would be a paradise indeed, which is saying a great deal. (This is not in the least intended for a joke. Go to Slough Station, and try.) Why should we be for ever worrying ourselves as to the possible results of our actions? If I deliberately perform a certain act, I presume that I have done my best under the circumstances, and what is the use of bothering myself into wrinkles and grey hairs because I cannot control the future? Things will turn out unexpectedly, and everybody knows it. Why, then, this harrowing care of disappointment? The fact is, the majority of mankind will make the worst of things, and not the best. Listen to people abusing the weather. There is no such unpardonable abuse of speech, or monstrous waste of time, as to grumble at the rain or snow. Such language may be all very

suitable for the bad quarter of an hour when waiting for dinner; it is then purely conventional, and means nothing. But to stand at the door or window and wonder whether the rain is ever going to begin, or whether it is ever going to end, and to complain of Nature because one or the other alternative does not forthwith commence, is ludicrously absurd. You may depend upon it that the man who is perpetually tapping his barometer, and wondering if it will be fine to-morrow, or a frost to-night, is an empty-headed noodle, fit only for a cycle of Cathay.

The worst of the book I am referring to is the suspicion its general tone engenders, when one comes to think about it, viz., that the author—delightful acquaintance as I am sure he must be—is, at the bottom, an eminently selfish man. Should these lines meet his eye, I trust he will forgive me, for I am bound to say that we live in an eminently selfish age. Still, it is pleasant to hope that some amongst us live a little for the happiness of others, and experience forces us to believe that no enjoyment is perfect that is not shared by some one else. Even if we 'claim and obtain our century,' may we not find the 'isolated position,' of which the author speaks so proudly, a little hard to bear? May we not find our ideal independent indolence grow somewhat cold as we touch the verge where we know our well-directed feet must stumble at the last? But I am forgetting myself—this is to speculate on to-morrow, and to-morrow must take care for itself.

From perusing the 'Secret of Long Life,' one turns naturally to Hawthorne's posthumous work, 'Septimius, a Romance of Immortality.' 'Zanoni,' and 'A Strange

Story,' prove how strongly such a theme can lay hold of a brilliant and imaginative mind. Small minds shriek frantically for the Elixir of Life, in order that they may escape from the terrors of the unknown and unknowable; great minds have earnestly thought about it in the hope that they may indefinitely prolong the earthly existence of intellects the world cannot well afford to lose. Lovers of high and poetic romance may well regret that one of the most creative romancists of the age did not live to complete the rough sketch we see in 'Septimius.' An intelligent and sympathetic reviewer remarks, that possibly the author may have intended this 'Romance of Immortality' as a grim, yet fascinating satire on a subject which even the most practical minds are not unaccustomed to entertain; and the canons of longevity laid down in the bleared manuscript Septimius with such difficulty construed, show at once how little the man who would abide by them could enjoy the gift they promised. According to these rules, everything must be sacrificed to self. The happiness of others becomes a disturbing element, and love is absolutely fatal. Given a race of Methuselahs upon such terms as these, and commonplace folk (and the world is made up of such units) would not be indisposed to consider death as decidedly preferable to chilly centuries of Stoic life. When Thomas Aquinas seized the hammer and knocked on the head the brazen image which he and his master, Albertus Magnus, had created, because of its garrulity which irritated him to such an excessive degree, the pious doctor was probably entirely convinced of the unwisdom of poaching on the preserves of Nature, and the fable bears its moral through all time.

Arnold de Villeneuve, who flourished in the thirteenth century, is said, according to Dr. Mackay, to have left the following receipt for ensuring a length of years considerably surpassing the period which is generally supposed to be a green old age. The person wishing to prolong his life almost indefinitely must rub himself well two or three times a week with the juice or marrow of cassia. Every night, on going to bed, he must put upon his heart a plaster, composed of a certain quantity of Oriental saffron, red rose leaves, sandal wood, aloes, and amber, liquefied in oil of roses and the best white wax. In the morning he must take it off, and enclose it carefully in a leaden box till the next night, when it must be again applied. If he be of a sanguine temperament, he is to take sixteen chickens; if phlegmatic, twenty-five; and if melancholy, thirty; these he is to put in a yard where the air and the water are pure. Upon these he is to feed, eating one a day; but these chickens have to be fattened by a peculiar method, which will impregnate their flesh with the qualities that are to produce longevity in the eater; for, being deprived of all other nourishment till they are almost dying of hunger, they are to be fed upon broth made of serpents and vinegar, thickened with wheat and bran. After two months of such diet they will be fit for the intending Methuselah's table, and are to be washed down with good hock or claret. Fancy living for a few centuries on eternal chicken! Possibly the serpents and vinegar might render that domestic fowl palatable for fifty years or so, but surely it would produce a most unhealthy nausea in time. Besides, the experimentalist would have to catch his serpents, and a single bite

might interfere unpleasantly with the theory. On the whole, I am inclined to think that we do pretty well as we are; and if we desire to live reasonably long, we shall achieve our end by the simpler rules of common sense.

Will Christmas fade away, I wonder, in the days to be? Will the twenty-fifth of December be any more than quarter day in the calendar of the golden year? Will people ever be amazed at the genial enthusiasm and generous warmth that inspired 'A Christmas Carol?' Will they be able by-and-by to unfold the great parable of Scrooge, and Marley's ghost, without reference to the reviews contained in ancient journals? Will learned works be written on, and one-ideaed archæologists be busy with, the word that now has such deep significance to many of us, though I am bound to add that its full appreciation is already lost to multitudes. Mr. Winwood Reade, an able writer, but one whose powers seem scarcely co-extensive with his ambition, tells us in his discursive work, 'The Martyrdom of Man,' that there is little hope for the human race if Christianity is not speedily abolished. If this mild suggestion is carried out, we presume that all relics of the old superstition will be abolished, root and branch, by the stern apostles of the new reformation, and Christmas Day will become a term forbidden to be used under the severest penalties. If some eccentric Purchas delights to scandalize his age by decking his abode with holly and mistletoe, he will be seized upon by some association, and held up to public hatred, contempt and ridicule, and possibly be condemned to penal servitude for his sins against the enlightenment of the age,

which will suffer no memory of the past to cast a shadow over the liberation of mankind from the thralldom of what were called religious creeds. The Chatterton of the period will have his licence immediately withdrawn, should he, having searched for novelties among the dusty records of Drury Lane, advertise a Grand Christmas Pantomime. No shows of Christmas beef will gladden the eyes of weary workers as they homeward wend; no Christmas turkey dangle from the poulterers' hooks; no Christmas goose club display its placards in the windows of the public house; no Christmas trees to disturb the intellectual progress of the priggish children; no Christmas boxes for the panting postmen. Well, if this is to be so in the glorious future that awaits mankind, before we are all absorbed into what Mr. Winwood Reade calls the great Human Mind, which exists somewhere or other like a phantom ogre, why, the sooner we go in for the martyrdom of man on an extensive scale the better. Let us call on our prophet and ask for aureoles, and request permission to follow him to the stake without delay. Let us cheerfully agree with him that we are only tolerably refined monkeys, and call upon Paget and Thompson to unfurl our tails for us and let us go free, and see how we like it when we enter the gigantic jaws in which, we are told, we are to be utterly annihilated.

Time is very valuable in these days, and every minute is composed of money just as it is of seconds; and as we should grapple time by the forelock, so we should pounce upon the grains of gold that in one form or another glide past us as the hands of the chronometer move steadily on. But I must confess to having

honestly read Mr. Winwood Reade's book from beginning to end without having gained a pennyworth by my labour. It was not until I reached the five hundred and forty-third page, that I discovered the meaning of the sensational title. 'I give to universal history,' says Mr. Winwood Reade, 'a strange but true title—*The Martyrdom of Man*. In each generation the human race has been tortured, that their children might profit by their woes. Our own prosperity is founded on the agonies of the past. Is it, therefore, unjust that we should also suffer for the benefit of those who are to come?' If this clever writer had not been the victim of a fatal fluency, would he not have seen how completely he contradicts himself? Admitting our prosperity, he entirely demolishes the notion of martyrdom. What his argument really amounts to is this—each succeeding age is better than the last. We get on very tolerably well, but posterity, profiting by our experiences, and being duly warned by our mistakes, will get on very much better. I can only say that this is the pleasantest definition of martyrdom I ever heard of. I always understood that a martyr was a man who would give up his life in defence of a principle which he, rightly or wrongly, entertained under solemn conviction of its truth. But it is an abuse of language to say that one generation is martyred for the succeeding one. In fact, it is absolute nonsense. The individual members of one generation leave off wiser than they began, and fathers hand on their experiences to their sons without the smallest feeling of anything so great as martyrdom. So far from this being an agonizing struggle upon

their part, they are only too happy to sink to rest with the satisfactory thought that their lives have not been in vain. The inventor of any acknowledged social improvement pockets the money he makes by his patent, and leaves his children in a state of opulence. No doubt he may have had in his time hard work, but work is man's glory and not his misery. It is only right that I should quote Mr. Winwood Reade's concluding words, for they appear to sum up the object for which his book is written:— 'Famine, pestilence, and war, are no longer essential for the advancement of the human race. But a season of mental anguish is at hand, and through this we must pass, in order that our posterity may rise. The soul must be sacrificed; the hope in immortality must die. A sweet and charming illusion must be taken from the human race, as youth and beauty vanish never to return.' If, indeed, the soul is to be sacrificed, and the hope in immortality must die, we may not unnaturally inquire what is there for posterity to rise to? Is the mental anguish we are to endure to result in nothing but the apotheosis of luxury? Has the busy intellect of the age in which we live no triumphs in store but those that can be measured by sensual enjoyment? Shall the soul be sacrificed upon a barren altar, erected to no God, and surrounded merely by a few quasi-utilitarian priests? Shall the hope in immortality—the innate conviction of the intellect the least and most profound—perish for the sake of the material prosperity of generations of Sybarites? Shall Plato be annihilated that he may give place to Lucullus? Think again, Mr. Winwood Reade; if the soul is to be sacrificed, is

there anything left worth rising to?

But our author candidly tells us in his preface that he has taken 'not only facts and ideas, but phrases and even paragraphs from other writers,' and he gives us a list of the individuals to whom he is indebted. Possibly, then, a wider range of reading, and a familiarity with writers who hold opposing views, may, in the course of time, give Mr. Reade occasion to modify his theories. At present, he pins what faith he has on the pages of Mr. Darwin. He assumes the irrefragable truth of the principles and convictions of the author of the 'Descent of Man.' He appears to have entered upon his study of that work with a determination to believe in it; and he seems to have silenced his own critical powers as he followed in the footsteps of his master. It may be, nay, we cannot doubt it, that the earth holds secrets which as yet are but partially revealed, and to the elucidation of which the clues as yet are but faint. If man's history is embedded in the hidden rocks, and his origin concealed beneath the depths of the sea, we may well believe that geology has yet greater triumphs in store, and we may be content that now the most scientific among us are but as 'children crying for the light.' A thoughtful writer in the current number of the 'Westminster Review,' concludes an article on Mr. Darwin's book with these pregnant words: 'He is a bold man who, testing Mr. Darwin's facts and arguments, believes in man's descent from the animal kingdom. He is a bolder who, resting on the evidence of ignorance, ventures to hold any other opinion.'

Mr. Reade tells us in his preface that there are passages in his book which his friends endea-

would to persuade him to suppress, lest they should provoke against him 'the anger of the public.' It is certainly difficult not to admire the courage which bade him act according to his own convictions, though undoubtedly he has a way of treating modern religious belief which may startle, and annoy, and shock. But it is obvious to the most superficial thinker upon such higher matters, that no principle that is worth possession can be withdrawn from the realms of searching criticism or biting satire. If Christianity now has to pass through intellectual fires, if its professors have to be subjected to mental tortures which are not unworthy to be placed beside the brief agonies of the martyrs of the Coliseum, it has not the smallest reason to complain. By its endless divisions, its internecine strife, its practical denial of its own first principle—charity, it has compelled a self-vivisection beneath which it must succumb or conquer. The old-world fulminations of a papal syllabus, the new article of faith which has been recently imposed upon two hundred millions of Christians, cannot cross the path of educated intellect without a challenge. The dictates of a questionable authority must be subjected to the laws of reason, and the demand for unhesitating faith *will* be met with the cold interrogatory—why? It is far better that honest men should speak out their minds, than that their silence should cover a moral fraud. Freedom of speech, freedom of inquiry—thus, and thus only, can the truth be ultimately made clear. How much better, too, for those who doubt, that they should not keep their dreary hopelessness pent within their own sad bosoms, for, by revealing

their despair, some physician may be found to give them comfort. Who can peruse the following words of Mr. Winwood Reade, when describing the early Christian hope of immortality, without feeling a pang of sympathy? 'Ah, sweet fallacious hope of a barbarous and poetic age! Illusion still cherished, for mankind is yet in its poetic youth. How easy it would be to endure without repining the toils and troubles of this miserable life, if indeed we could believe that, when its brief period was passed, we should be united to those whom we have loved, to those whom death has snatched away, or whom fate has parted from us by barriers cold and deep and hopeless as the grave. If we could believe this, the shortness of life would comfort us—how quickly the time flies by!—and we should welcome death. But we do not believe it, and so we cling to our tortured lives, dreading the dark nothingness, dreading the dispersal of our elements into cold unconscious space.'

There is a bitter sadness about such unbelief as this that impels us by reason or by instinct, which you will, to emphatically deny the truth of the sweeping assertion that we do *not* believe in immortality. 'Spirits of the wise and good,' writes a disciple of pure theism, 'are ye not worth preserving in the sight of God?' And as we know that no particle of matter perishes, and that nothing is so small, so insignificant, as to be wholly lost, so, Christian or not, we may well believe that the soul, spirit, mind of man are absolutely indestructible. Death is but the climax of disease, and the natural conditions with which we are surrounded are now but in the infancy of their explanation. Science has

wonders yet in store beside which the inventions of our age will seem to posterity as poor and clumsy, and it may be that we are stumbling on the threshold of discoveries which await us beyond the portal of the world of spirits. 'There are fairer visions for these eyes to see, and paths more glorious for these feet to tread.' Does not, indeed, Mr. Reade himself confess it, when he goes on to say: 'As drops in the ocean of water, as atoms in the ocean of air, as sparks in the ocean of fire within the earth, our minds do their appointed work; and serve to build up the strength and beauty of the one great Human Mind which grows from century to century, from age to age, and is, perhaps, itself a mere molecule within some higher mind.' What is the meaning of this allegory, if it does not point to a future of some kind somewhere?

I cannot forbear quoting, as a contrast, the sentiments on this subject of the light-hearted author of the 'Secret of Long Life.' He asks, 'What is life?' and replies, 'We can approximate to a solution of this problem only through another. What is man? My answer is, a living indestructible spirit, inhabiting a material form which that spirit itself moulds and develops. Man possesses life so long as the atoms of his material form remain in their place; when they wear out, the spirit recommences its work, moulding for itself a new tenement. . . . High

thoughts and noble impulses give light to the eye, music to the voice, life to the lips, grace to the form. A long series of thoughts and impulses makes the soul stronger for its next effort; and the poet or sage who leaves this world (to write vaguely) after a great career, will renew his youth, and reappear on this or some other scene, with a fairer form than ever, and with greater power to ascend towards the infinite summit of existence. Where we shall pass the immeasurable future is no concern of ours. . . . As to the locality of our future—why, the universe is very wide, and if space be an immense cone, as would appear from the prevalence of ellipse and hyperbola in planetary and cometary motion, it must be long indeed before the best of us approach its apex. About such matters it is unwise to speculate. Indeed, when we have the most important truths that concern life in our possession, idle speculation about accidentals is infantile. We know *what* we are. Why should we guess as to *where* we are going? The soul is, and it consciously possesses faculties infinitely improvable. Fears and fancies of the future will therefore be dismissed by all whose intellectual health is sound; they will enjoy the instant, knowing that this is the true way to secure enjoyment of the unknown and unguessable future.'

Such be thy gods, O Philosophy!

FREE LANCE.

END OF VOL. XXII.







